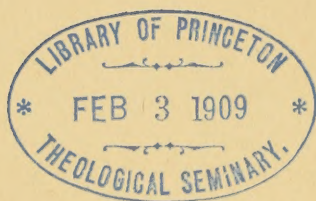


JESUS OF NAZARETH



S. C. BRADLEY



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JESUS OF NAZARETH



JESUS OF NAZARETH

A LIFE

✓ BY
S. C. BRADLEY

"Poetry comes nearer to vital truth than history"
PLATO



BOSTON
SHERMAN, FRENCH & COMPANY
1908

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Sherman, French & Company
Entered at Stationers' Hall

Printed in U. S. A.

INTRODUCTION

The object of this book is twofold. First, to bring into prominence the Manliness of Jesus,—to give point and emphasis to that saying of Paul's which declares that Jesus was in all points tempted like as we are; and second, to fill up that gap in the record of Jesus' life which includes and shuts us out from all its formative period, and which, in large part, must necessarily be the source and basis of whatever he said and did.

That there are other important phases of Jesus' life may be freely admitted. Very properly, there is a theology of Jesus, and also a psychology of him. These will neither be ignored nor treated separately. They will appear as fundamental and inseparable outgrowths of character and of life. Whatever may be said of Jesus' divinity, the most partial Trinitarian must admit that he is to be studied first of all as a man. His outward and daily life *was* that of a man. To the very last, his most intimate friends, even his mother and brethren, so regarded him. Though it be admitted that Jesus was and is God, to many devout and pious souls it seems presumption to study him as God; for it is asked, What do we know about God? If we are to find God in Jesus, we must find Him as the summing up, the expressed essence, of that incomparable human life. But here, too, we are much in the dark. If we accept as inspired the stories of the evangelists, they are still mere fragments,—the minutest shards of a priceless vase. Even if we restore the vase in any way yet attempted, our bewilderment is but the more increased, and we are forced to inquire the secret of its origin. Whence such clay, such form, such tempering in long-drawn furnace-fire? There are no inquiries that we more ardently “press upon the silence of history” than these: and it is

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partly to furnish an answer to them that this book is written.

Then, too, there are not a few truly pious souls who from Jesus as God shrink back chilled and daunted; their amazement is not that he did so much, but that he did no more. And is it not true that when we look upon Jesus as a man, we are awed, inspired, lifted up. We are drawn and bound to him by the mighty bands of kinship. He is our brother. What he did *we* may do. The illimitable realms of spirit are open to *us*. We, too, may aspire. We may trust that our Father, God, has sent a Man among men to give them an everlasting example of Manhood, and to show what capabilities lie in human nature. We can say, "Thus lived a Man. I am a Man."

Again, in anticipation of the animadversions of orthodoxy, one word as to authorities. It will be asked why, if I am a believer in Jesus, I do not adhere to Scripture. To this I reply, What Scripture? Which of the four Gospels would you have me follow; or would you in some matters have me reject them all, and stand with Paul or even with Keim or Edersheim? The disagreements of the Scripture accounts have come to appear so glaring, and are so undenied and undeniable, that the most orthodox writers are forced to have recourse to the infidel's sorry weapons, corruption, interpolation, and the like. So evangelical and erudite a writer as Edersheim naïvely takes such refuge. In his two labored volumes on the life of Jesus there are scores of instances where he declares that the sacred text has been tampered with. Here it is an "addition" or a "gloss," there a "subtraction"; it is "spurious," a "paraphrase," an "interpolation," or "wrongly translated." In one place he expressly doubts the united testimony of the three Synoptists, and says that what they record was an "afterthought" and the real truth was not as stated by them. It will be found upon examination that this is the method of all writers on the subject, even the most ortho-

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dox. There is indeed no other way. Either they must accept John and reject Matthew, or *vice versa*. They must say this is text and that interpolation, or this is interpolation and that text. They adopt a theory of their own regarding the main subject, and in accordance with this theory reject or adopt or explain away, as best suits their theory. The conditions of the case,—the contradictions, crudities, and absurdities of the text,—make such a course absolutely necessary; and if I in these pages have made a further and bolder advance into the region of hypothesis, and have allowed my imagination a higher flight, it must be seen that I am pursuing a path already laid out and commended, and I feel sure that I have walked in it honestly and reverently.

S. C. B.

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I

JESUS AND JOHN

"There are few questions we more eagerly press upon the silence of history than this."—KEIM.

The time is about the year 6 * A. D. The scene, the Wilderness of Ziph, not far from Hebron. Two half-grown boys in Jewish garb are making their slow way from the high and rocky plateau eastward towards the valley of Engedi and the Dead Sea. Except for the rare trail of conies and wild goats it is a pathless wild, apparently without inhabitant. High rocky ridges alternate with tremendous rifts and gorges, with here and there a narrow valley, watered in winter by mountain torrents and, rarely, by more enduring springs of warm or brackish water. Apparently at no very remote period, a convulsion of nature had rent and tossed about these huge mountain masses, and no accumulation of soil has yet found place on the bare and splintered rocks. It is "Jeshimon," the land of "desolation," of "horror," and of "drought."

Now, in the Spring and the time of rain, there is some vegetation. From the crevices of the rocks appears a scanty growth of cactus, and white flowering broom, with, more rarely, crocuses, hyacinths, and dandelions. Here and there are birds of rich plumage and delightful song, the gaudy bulbul or sunbird and the hoopoe, the nightingale and the English lark, the titmouse, the sparrow, and the song thrush. All of these but the hardy cacti and perhaps the bulbul and hoopoe will disappear in the fierce summer heat, and except in the deep wadies and favored

* It should be observed that the birth of Jesus was certainly six, and perhaps twelve, years before the year 1.

spots where Essenes and hermits have fixed an abode, the whole land will be bare, lifeless, and desolate. It was nearly noon when the two boys, by dint of bold and skillful climbing, reached the summit of one of the highest ridges of this whole region. Although it was early Spring, the sun, shining through the cloudless sky and reflected from the bare rocks, was very oppressive, and the boys, panting and perspiring, sought the shelter of an enormous rock and sat down.

That these boys are not brothers we may be sure at a glance. There is not even a family resemblance, and there is no perceptible difference in age. The stouter, and apparently the more energetic of the two, is of the marked Jewish type in every detail,—the fine olive tint of skin, the black flashing eyes, the teeth, even, regular, and white as milk, and hair (unshorn from birth) black, wavy, and shining. The other is so different in feature that we are forced almost to doubt his Jewish extraction. He is a trifle taller, and less stout and muscular, but drawn upon lines and cast in a mould that would have put Apelles or Phidias into transports. The eyes are dark, not black, looking out dreamily from unfathomable depths, the complexion tanned by exposure but pure and clear as alabaster, and the hair brown, wavy, abundant, and, like the other's, unshorn. And the face,—surely not Jewish; neither is it Greek, nor Roman. It is idyllic, even ideal,—the face we dream of when we see Heaven opened, and the rapt faces about the Throne.

The boys sat in silence for some moments, looking out over the surpassing scene. At length the darker one, whose name was John, addressing his companion, said, "Didn't I tell you the view would be glorious? Isn't it wonderful?"

"Yes," answered the other, "it is very wonderful; but do you think it is good to be much in such places? Somehow I don't like it."

"Father says," replied John, "that solitude has ever been the school of the prophets, and you know how very hard it is to keep the Law among the world's people."

"Yes, it is very hard," said the other, "but what good can one do, living here?"

"I never thought about that; but a life here might be a life of preparation, getting ready to do good — when an opportunity offered."

"Well, these hermits and Essenes that you tell me of,— they live here all their lives and are always preparing, but what real good do they do?"

John did not answer for some moments; then with a solemn smile and looking up at the other: "I believe, Jesus, that you are a born philosopher. You are always studying into things that way; but you wait till you have seen Father Menahem, Cochiba, and the rest. They'll explain to you better than I can."

John suddenly sprang to his feet, and pointing with his hand to a spot a thousand feet below, and a mile or more away, exclaimed, "There they are now, see, at the foot of that great hill that stands out by itself and is partly terraced on one side. See those people moving there! That's Cochiba and the rest of them. See?"

Jesus put his hand over his eyes to screen them from the sun and looked long in the direction indicated. "Yes, I see something that looks like tents, and something moving there; but they look no bigger than ants from here. What a view this is!"

"I am glad if you begin to appreciate it. From here Sodom and Gomorrah could have been seen before God sent the fire from Heaven upon them, and where now is the great Salt Sea was a fertile plain and no doubt, so Father says, the very garden of the world; and there, twenty miles away, though you wouldn't think it, is the Great Masada that King Herod spent so much of Israel's money and labor upon. How its great towers glisten in the sun!"

And there across the sea, far in the southeast, those white towers are Kerak, thirty miles away. Here, towards the sun rising, is Macherus, another of Herod's strongholds. It makes one shudder to think of the poor Israelites who have died chained to the rocks in those dungeons, and how many are there now, dying by inches and waiting to be crucified. Father says that God delivered Israel of the monster Herod, but these Romans are scarcely better."

The boys sat in silence for some moments, then Jesus said slowly and solemnly: "Your father and my father and, I think, all good Israelites believe that the time of Israel's deliverance is at hand. The Messiah will surely come. In Galilee we have a man whom they call Judas the Gaulonite, whose father was the noted zealot Ezekias, who goes around among the people trying to get them to rise and fight against the Romans. He has been at our house and I have heard him talk to Father and others. I tell you, it makes one's blood tingle to hear him."

The black eyes of John began to kindle with the words of Jesus, and his manner became at once excited and martial. Stretching out his clenched hand, he exclaimed fiercely, "I tell you it is the only way. Our fathers say 'no,' and we must honor and obey, it is true; but thank God,—and blessed be His name,—the day will come when we can act for ourselves. We, you and I, have studied the Scripture, and we can repeat the most of the Law and the Prophets without book, and we know how it has ever been. How did Israel become free under Samson or Gideon or Deborah? They say that I am a Nazarite, and am dedicated to God; but so was Samson a Nazarite, and the prophet Samuel was a Nazarite. And didn't Samson fight? And remember how Samuel hewed Agag in pieces when the faint-hearted Saul had saved him alive. And didn't Joshua and David fight? And didn't God Himself go with them, putting strength in their arms and courage in their hearts, so that it was as promised,

one could chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight? God always gave victory, no matter what the odds, if the men were true, and He will again. He will surely raise up another Samson or Shamgar if only Israel deserves to have them. Father says that Israel must repent and turn to God before ever a Deliverer can come. Oh! if it could only be now. How glorious to take part in such a war. Just think of it! Why, I had rather be a Samson or a Shamgar than even David or Solomon. To take just your ox goad or a jawbone or anything that came to hand, and just walk in among those abominable, heathen Romans, breaking heads and piling up the dead like jack-straws."

John was growing more and more excited as he talked, walking up and down, raising a clenched fist, and shaking his black mane of hair, while his keen eyes blazed with a martial fire, kindled of a thousand years. There was an answering light in the dark eyes of his companion and a quick surge of sympathetic passion curled his lips and expanded his nostrils, but it was only for a moment.

It was with perfect calmness, if also with a little sadness, that he made answer. "You should not allow yourself to get so excited, John," he said. "If you would be a Samson or a Shamgar, you must keep a cool head. But come, we ought to be moving, if we get back before night."

"Ah, well, I don't much care if we don't get home to-night; we can stay with Addi or Chicoba," answered John. "However," he added, "we should of course be going," and the boys began the slow and perilous descent.

As they reached the foot of the cliff a small animal jumped out from a clump of broom close at their feet, and the boys sprang after it in hot pursuit. Dodging here and there among the loose stones and boulders, the animal at length took refuge in a crevice of the rocks, and John at once began poking the creature with the staff he carried in his hand.

"It's a coney," he said, "and I can kill it with my staff."

"And why do you wish to kill it?" asked the other. "Let me put in my hand and catch it."

"Oh, don't do that," said John, "the beast will tear your hand to pieces; you ought to see what teeth and claws they've got."

"It won't bite me," said Jesus, at the same time thrusting in his hand and drawing out carefully the frightened and struggling thing. Then he stroked its head tenderly, and in a moment it became quiet and began nibbling at a spray of broom that Jesus offered it. "Nothing ever bites me," said Jesus. "Once I put my hand in a hole that way and caught a fox. That was at Uncle Clopas', and he said the fox would tear my hand off; but it did just as this coney has done, and I let it go, as I am doing now," and suiting the action to the word he set the little animal down. It did not run away at once, but began nibbling at the green things which here grew in more abundance.

"I don't see," said Jesus, "how people can kill things just for fun; it always seems to me a dreadful thing. Though of course it is necessary to kill the lambs for sacrifice, it seems strange and unnatural."

The place for which they had started was again lost to view behind another rocky ridge, and while they were clambering up and down among the rocks John began explaining to Jesus how he must conduct himself with the Essenes whom they were about to visit,—how he must avoid contact, not only with their persons, but even with their tools or utensils, for that, he said, would make them unclean in their estimation and give them a great deal of trouble to purify. But Jesus said he knew, for he had seen some of the Essenes at Uncle Clopas', and Uncle Clopas was quite inclined to be one of them himself.

At length the boys came out where they could see and be

seen of the Essenes, one of whom at once came towards them, making motions as if to warn them away. But when he saw John and knew him, he came on with a smile and, though careful to avoid their touch, invited them cordially to go with him.

It was the hour of noon when the company of Essenes ceased their labors and prepared for the first meal of the day. The company consisted of about thirty men and seven novitiates, boys of from eight to twelve years. The boys were kept by themselves, and ate apart from the others: their touch was pollution to all higher grades.

There were several tents of camels' hair, into which the men all retired,—but came forth presently divested of all their clothing except a short apron about the loins, and led by a venerable but withered old man with long white hair and a monstrous beard. They ranged themselves beside the small mountain rivulet which here flowed past and began, with mumbled prayers, and each in precisely the same form, to bathe themselves from head to foot.

This, John explained to Jesus, they did winter and summer in the morning before sunrise, and before each of the two meals they ate each day, and at very many other times when they had happened to spit to the left instead of the right, or touched, or been touched by, anything ceremonially unclean.

After completing their ablutions with more prayers, they retired again to their tents, whence they soon emerged, each now clothed in a single clean, white, linen garment that was held sacred and was worn only at meal times, each meal being held as a religious sacrifice and served by the baker, who was the priest. The meal, consisting of barley bread, water, one vegetable, and honey, with a formal prayer before and after, was eaten in silence. After the meal they retired again to their tents, where they resumed their white woolen working garments and went again about their tasks.

Jesus and John were invited to eat with the seven boys, who were novitiates and ate by themselves; and in all but the bath and the change of raiment they were very much at home, for the Essenes were all Jews, differing mainly in that they were more strict in their observance of the Law and renounced wine and all animal food and all blood sacrifices. After their meal Cochiba showed the boys about the place, at the same time cautiously pressing upon them the desirability of becoming Essenes.

First he showed them the immense cisterns, a long row of them, cut in the soft lime rock at the foot of the hill, where the terraces were being made. The cisterns were thirty feet deep and very large. Some of them had already been filled by turning the little mountain brook into them; all would be filled that way, to provide for the fierce drought of the long hot summer, when no rain fell. Now the men were all at work on the terraces, some building the supporting walls and others, with baskets woven of willows, carrying soil that the stream had brought down from the mountains, up and on to the terrace levels, to cover thinly the bare rocks. Jesus could not but notice that the men, and even the boys, seemed very sad and spiritless; there were no songs or laughter; there were no women or children; no animals, no instruments of music, or gardens of flowers,—only solitude and endless toil.

Then Cochiba took them to a large tent, before which the old man whom he called Father Menahem was sitting on a stone bench, reading from a parchment roll of the Law. He did not speak or look up for some time after they came up, but continued to read as if not knowing that they were there.

At length Cochiba spoke with reverence. "Father, these are the children I told you of; will you not speak to them?" The old man raised his eyes slowly and looked first at John and then long and steadfastly at Jesus. Grad-

ually his dim eyes and wrinkled face brightened and his whole frame seemed to swell and dilate.

With eyes still fixed on Jesus, he moved his lips silently, as if repeating some secret spell or incantation, and at last, with hand upraised in benediction, he spoke aloud, "Blessed be the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck, for thou shalt stand for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a light to lighten the Gentiles, for thou art beloved of God: blessed be His name. And I see the hosts of evil compass thee about: thou shalt be tried as in the fires of Gehenna. Wo unto thee, Jerusalem! Wo unto them that buy and sell in the courts of the Most High, and be drunken with the blood and the wine of the Sacrifices. Wo. Wo. Wo."

The old man, as if exhausted with his effort, bowed his head upon his breast, and though his lips still moved, he spoke no more aloud. Cochiba drew the boys away and told them that Father Menahem was a prophet of great authority, having while yet a young man foretold the career of Herod, and having often been summoned by Herod and his sons to explain their dreams and reveal to them what was to come. He was one of those whom Josephus had in mind when he wrote of the Essene:

"Consecrated from childhood by many purifications, and familiar beyond thought with the Holy Books and the utterances of the prophets, they claim to see into the future, and in truth, there is scarcely an instance in which their prophecies have been found false." Cochiba did not fail to ply the boys with the usual arguments in favor of an ascetic life, and at last dismissed them with an earnest invitation to come again.

.

A few hours later, in another part of the desert the same boys might have been seen making their slow way over the pathless wild. The sun had set and the sudden darkness of

the tropics had come upon them. By extreme daring and hardihood they had descended the almost perpendicular wall of a narrow valley, and were now walking along an almost level way, shut in on either hand by bare rocky walls that seemed to reach the sky.

The boys realized that they were lost, and though they were yet mere children they did not cry out or complain. In the loving confidence of childhood they instinctively put their arms about each other and walked slowly on. Around and beneath them were only the dark frowning rocks, but through the clear desert air the stars shone with a brilliance and lustre unknown in other climes. A great constellation was blazing over head, and directly before them the distant east was flushing with the rising moon.

"And He maketh Orion, the Pleiades, and the Chambers of the South," spoke Jesus solemnly, and then the boys together repeated the well-known prayer, familiar to every Jew. "Blessed be Thou! Lord our God, who through Thy word didst create the Heavens, and their whole host by the breath of Thy mouth. He appointed them a law, and time, that they should not go back from their places. Joyfully and gladly they fulfill the will of their Creator, whose workings and whose works are Truth. He spake to the moon and commanded her that she should renew herself in glory and splendor for those whom He has carried from their mother's breast, for they, too, will be one day renewed like her and glorify their Creator, after the honor of His kingdom. Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who renewest the moons." And the full moon arose in her glory and splendor, filling the narrow valley with a silvery flood of light.

A thousand feet above their heads the chalk cliffs gleamed white and shining against the blue of heaven, and lower down, on the dark bosom of the cliffs of flint and lime, shone like jewels scintillating particles of quartz and spar. The boys paused and looked up in silent awe. Then they

became aware of a change in the aspect of things all round them. The thorny cacti of the desert had disappeared, and fresh green herbage grew about their feet. A breath of wind came laden with the rich, heavy odors of oleander and orange bloom. A little farther on, and they could see the dark foliage of trees and then, as if from the very body of the rocky wall, a deep voice repeating, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might; and these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up."

The boys could have joined in the prayer, for it was one repeated by every Jew twice daily, but they were awed into silence. When the prayer was finished, and they stood trembling, there was a movement among the shrubbery and then a naked, hairy, and bearded man came forth into the moonlight, bearing in his hand a large gourd filled with water, with which he proceeded, in the set form of the Rabbinic ritual, to bathe himself from head to foot, at the same time uttering the set prayer for the occasion. The man appeared entirely absorbed in his devotions, and did not notice the boys till he had finished.

Then he saw them, and without speaking went back into the shrubbery. Presently he came forth again, girt with a mere apron of fig-leaves, and with no other clothing. Having found that they were only lost children, he blessed them in patriarchal fashion, and offered them water for a bath, which they used in the usual formal manner. Then he invited them into his dwelling. It was a small natural cave, or grotto, opening from the perpendicular wall of rock and so dark within, that the boys shuddered and drew back; finally however, reassured by the words and example

of the Hermit, they all entered, lay down on the stone floor, and slept.

The faint light of earliest day was stealing into the cave when the boys were awakened by the Hermit, and all went forth to renewed ablutions and the same prayers that had been used at night. The Hermit then caused the boys to sit down on the ground, and brought forth a bag containing a dark crumby substance and some honey in the comb: these, with water, made their breakfast. The dark crumby substance, already known to John as dried locusts, was eyed by Jesus with suspicion, and extreme hunger alone induced him to partake of it.

After breakfast the Hermit retired to his cell to continue more mortifying devotions, and the boys, left to themselves, looked about them. A tiny spring, oozing from the foot of the cliff, and the same in volume at all seasons of the year, by husbanding supplied the wants of the Hermit, and made fertile a few yards of desert about the cave. There was no attempt at cultivation; some more provident hand may have planted the seeds, in the years long past, but the present occupant only plucked and garnered. The orange, the olive, the fig, and the vine yielded their fruits in their season, and what the wild things of the desert,—the birds, the coney and the fox,—left unconsumed, the Hermit gathered and thankfully used. He drove nothing away; he contended with none, man, bird, or beast, but shared cheerfully with all; he neither delved nor spun, but ate of the natural fruits of the desert and clothed himself with leaves and the bark of trees; he made no use of fire; he had no occupation but prayers, mortifications, ablutions; no study but to know the will of God; no reading but the Law and the Prophets, which, as he truly believed, were the very words of the Most High. In these, by continually dwelling upon them by night and by day and through long years, he found mystical meanings, dark prophecies, and minute directions for all

the innumerable details of life. Every word of the sacred text, even every letter, had a mystical signification which volumes would be inadequate to explain. So lived the Hermit and Prophet Addi of the desert.

II

THE YOUNG SHEPHERD

"From the Nazareth hills Jesus as a growing boy saw daily the smoke of burning villages, and in Joseph's cottage, as in all others in the land, every heart beat thick at the hourly news of some fresh story of blood."—GEIKIE.

The scene is changed to the hill country, near Cana of Galilee. It is the home of Clopas, the uncle of Jesus, and of his cousins, James, Thaddeus, and Simon. Uncle Clopas is a shepherd. Jesus in boyhood was a frequent and welcome visitor at this home. Here amid Arcadian scenes, the sheepfolds, the sheep and lambs, the grass and the flowers, he passed delightful days and nights, tending his uncle's sheep, and dreaming youth's dreams of hope and happiness. The interchange of social hospitalities seems to have been a national characteristic among the common people of Palestine. Their few simple wants and the unity of domestic and religious life made association free and unrestrained. In proportion as they shunned and shut out all Gentile contact, they sought and valued the love and friendship of their own.

Jesus and his mother, after returning from Hebron, have gone up to spend a few days with Uncle Clopas and the cousins at Cana. It is yet springtime, and Galilee, the garden of the world, is a paradise. These rocky hillsides, though less adapted to agriculture than the plains of Esdraelon and Gennesaret, are very fertile, and in places, by prodigious labor, are terraced with massive walls of rock and cultivated by spade and mattock to their summits. The sheep walks occupy the most rocky eminences, and luxuriant gardens of olive, walnuts, vines, apricots, pomegranates,

and figs are interspersed with rich pastures and flowery meads. The Clopas home is in the village of Cana, and is very humble and lowly, and even the sheep which he tends are the property of Simon, the rich Pharisee, who lives in Capernaum. But Clopas and his good wife Mary care little for riches: their children, their friends, even the stranger and the wandering beggar are more to them than possessions. Their hospitality is limited only by their means, and it is no uncommon occurrence that the last drop of oil and the last handful of meal are bestowed in entertainment of strangers. Jesus loved dearly to visit this home in Cana. If he suffered some privations there, and often had to roll himself in his aba and sleep on the ground, he was more than compensated by the kindness that was shown him and by the opportunity of hearing and seeing a great variety of men and things. Greeks, Arabs and Roman soldiers, Essenes, and even the fierce Sicarii or assassins who threatened death to all who yielded to or made peace with Rome, were made equally welcome at the Clopas domicile. Then, too, while Uncle Clopas and his own boys were digging and planting the patch of ground that was assigned them, Jesus could tend the sheep in the mountains. It was a task he enjoyed above all other employments; he loved the sheep, and was eager to be alone with them in the free mountain air.

And so it is that we find him this beautiful Spring morning, seated beneath a huge, wide spreading, gnarled olive tree, with the sheep about him. Jesus was, while yet a mere child, thoroughly conversant with the Scriptures, and had imbibed, from a pious father and mother, an almost passionate interest in those great religious questions which were then agitating the Hebrew world,—the coming of the Messiah and the deliverance of Israel. Jesus was thinking of these things now. From this mountain top was spread out before him in the dazzling sunlight a scene that aroused in his ardent and pious soul thoughts and feelings of noble

impulse and high endeavor for his wronged and bleeding country.

In the west, not thirty miles away, arose the mighty headland of Carmel, dark and green against the blue of the sea, — Carmel, with Kishon at its roots, Carmel, on whose top the Great Prophet of Israel had set up the altar to the Living God and brought down fire from Heaven,— Kishon, on whose banks the four hundred and fifty false prophets of Baal had been slaughtered by the implacable Tishbite, and Kishon, where the iron cars of Sisera were discomfited, and whose waters swept them away. Northward again in clear perspective rose the high hills of Naphtali, with Kedesh, and Harosheth of the Gentiles, whither Barak had pursued the vile Canaanitish host, and where the dark Jael had crowned the victory by her ghastly deed of blood. Jesus was repeating, unconsciously, the song familiar as a cradle hymn to every Jew, “Gilead abode beyond Jordan, and why did Dan remain in ships. Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches. Zebulon and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field. The kings came and fought; they fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money. They fought from Heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera; the river Kishon swept them away,— that ancient river, the river Kishon. O, my soul, thou hast trodden down strength. ‘Curse ye Meroz,’ said the Angel of the Lord, ‘curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty.’”

Jesus sat for some moments silent, then returning to the same subject, repeated: “Why abodest thou among the sheep folds to hear the bleatings of the flocks. For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.” Jesus was so absorbed in these reflections that he did not notice the approach up the mountain side of a young girl, younger, somewhat, than Jesus, and beautiful beyond words.

She paused at almost every step to gather the flowers which grew everywhere in profusion. Now her hands were full and she sat down on a flowery bank and wove them into garlands of wondrous beauty. With these she not only decked herself — but hung wreaths of gorgeous lilies about the neck of the young gazelle that was with her.

Now, on the smooth surface of a broad, flat rock, obeying the natural impulse of childish mirth and gayety, she holds aloft great wreaths of lilies, and dances, and as she dances, sings: “I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys; as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters; as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up nor awake my love till he please. The voice of my beloved, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved spoke and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth. The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away, O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. My beloved is mine, and I am his. He feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away; turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel.”

And the gazelle joins in the dance; it frisks and gambols, while the young girl laughs and sings. No eye sees

them; no ear hears them: it is the sport of the Hamadryads.

At last they have reached the top of the mountain, and the young girl, perceiving Jesus absorbed in thought, approaches him stealthily from behind. Now she has seized him, one hand on each side of his head, and smothering her laughter calls out in a feigned voice, "My prisoner. Tell me now who it is, and I will let you go."

Jesus without turning raises his hands, and grasping the young girl's wrists, one with each hand, and forcibly releasing himself, turns and looks on his fair companion smilingly. "Ah, you Sibyl! I knew it was you, but what do ye here? You're playing truant, I'm afraid."

"No, indeed, Aunt Mary said I could come, but she didn't want me to, for, do you know, the news came this morning, after you came away, that a party of Roman soldiers was cut off and killed, every man of them, by Jacobus and his men somewhere near here only yesterday; and Auntie was afraid I would meet some of the soldiers who are in search of Jacobus. But they wouldn't hurt me, if I did meet them. I know one Roman soldier now. He is an officer, and rides a horse; he passes our house often, and stops and talks, and has given me lots of things."

While the young girl was speaking, Jesus fixed his eyes upon her in grave rebuke. "You had better look out, Miss Sibyl, we Jews are not to have anything to do with the Romans! Do your father and mother know the Roman you speak of, and do they talk with him?"

"I don't know that they do," answered the girl, lowering her eyes and sulking.

"Well, you had better look out, it isn't right for you to talk with Romans." There was stern rebuke in the lad's voice and manner, and the color came and went in the young girl's cheeks.

At length, with pouting lips, she raised her eyes and said petulantly, "I don't care, *this* Roman is nice anyway, and,

see, he gave me this." And displaying a ring of gold on her finger, she raised her hand filled with garlands, and sprang off in a mazy dance, singing again, "O! I am the rose of Sharon."

The lambs which had pressed about her feet and nibbled at her flowers and the gazelle also sprang away and gambled in a wild frolic of spring-time mirth. They had no thought of being observed, but at the moment a cohort of Roman soldiers, climbing the steep from the other side, had reached the summit and now stood screened by a thicket of wild figs and walnuts, where they could see without being seen.

At length one of their number, a very young man but of commanding presence, fully armed and wearing the insignia of a Roman officer, stepped forward and addressed them. "Bravo, my nymph! Such grace and beauty are wasted in these cursed mountains. You are fine enough for a king's palace, and should go to Cæsarea, where you could be educated and appreciated." The young girl ceased her dancing and singing the moment she saw the Roman, and with the lambs and the gazelle huddling about her drew away towards Jesus and stood close by his side.

Jesus had arisen at the first sound of the soldier's voice and stood facing him. The soldier came boldly forward and, without deigning to so much as look at Jesus, placed a hand on the bare shoulder of the girl and stooped as if to kiss her cheek. It was a terrible moment! Without thought of consequences the young lad at once put out both hands and, summoning all his strength, gave the soldier a push that, unprepared as he was and with his foot caught against a stone, sent him sprawling down the steep. Regaining his feet instantly, with a great oath he rushed back upon Jesus, who, still calmly facing him, was with one terrible blow struck bleeding and insensible to the earth. The girl meantime, screaming with fright and with the lambs and gazelle following her, flew away like a wild roe down the mountain side and was soon lost to sight.

III

THE FISHERMEN OF GALILEE

“The fishermen and sailors of the Lake of Galilee were a numerous and redoubted class, with something of the feeling of a clan.”—
GEIKIE.

The lake of Gennesaret is the “Eye of Galilee,” the “flashing gem on the breastplate of Aaron.” On all sides but the east, it is enclosed by the fairest, most fruitful, most delightful region of the Earth. Its shores are the home of the olive and the vine; fresh figs and ripe grapes may be gathered ten months in the year. The palm, the myrtle, the citron, and the pomegranate abound. It has innumerable springs of pure and sparkling water; its wines are called the nectar of the gods. It is in the midst of the land flowing with milk and honey, the scene and inspiration of the Song of Songs. The shores of the lake are teeming with a population more dense than any other in the known world. Its pure waters are swarming with fish of the choicest kinds.

A race of sturdy fishermen inhabit its shores. On the east, the barren mountains of the Gaulonite abut precipitously, and there, in caves and dens of wild beasts, amid inaccessible fastnesses, the unconquerable successors of Gideon, Ehud, Shamgar and the Maccabees, in sullen watch defy the power of Rome and maintain the hope of Israel.

On a night in Spring, of the time of which we write, there is gathered a party of fishermen on the shore of this lake, not far from Capernaum. Most of the party are young men, with two or three boys, and one venerable grey-beard, who seems to be the master and director. It is already midnight, and the men, weary with their labors and discouraged by poor success, have left their net piled on the

stern of their boat and are gathered about the fire. The boy Jesus, with his cousin Simon, son of Clopas, and Uncle Clopas are here.

They have come down to visit and fish with Father Joazer and his son Zebedee, who are fishermen. The boys gathered the sticks for the fire, and before it was dark had climbed among the cliffs and found some early figs and ripe grapes. These lie heaped on palm and fig leaves near a well-filled wine skin, accessible to all. The men, sitting about the fire, are roasting some small fish on rods of oleander.

It is a beautiful night, without a moon but bright with stars. Through the pure air of the Orient they draw more near and shine with a more wondrous light than in less favored climes. The air is filled with perfume; the fire of cedar wood and balsam sends forth delightful odors, and near at hand, within the light of the fire, great clumps of oleanders, bending with blossom, mingle their perfume with the cedar and balsam. At intervals, a moving breath from the uplands comes laden with the odors of lilies and hyacinths, and blossoming grapes and figs.

But listen! One of the men is speaking. "By the Great Mazar of Chorazin, I believe that fellow — and may God curse his grandfather, who sold me that charm — was only a vile Canaanitish lout. He said he was a son of Abraham, and that his name was Achan. He claimed to have learned his art in Babylon and of the Magi that the Prophet Daniel tells about, and he told a great tale of what he had done in Egypt. There, he said, a fisherman who had bought one of his charms got rich by it in a year, for he said that fishes of all kinds flocked to his nets and even whales came up out of the Great Sea and allowed themselves to be caught without the least trouble." And the man, still growling out curses and maledictions, caught up a gourd shell, which he filled from the wine skin and drank off at a draught.

The men and boys seated and lying about the fire listen with solemn faces while Joazer makes reply. "Thou hast, no doubt, been deceived, Boaz, and thy money wasted, for since thy charm has hung to our boat's prow we have caught nothing. It was an evil hour when thou paidest thine all for that bauble, and thou wilt remember that I warned thee."

"By the head of the Prophet Jonah, how was I to know that the charm was not magical?" And again our Boaz goes off into a fit of cursing the false charm vendor and all his ancestors down to Adam. "I'll put no more trust in charms," he continued, "I'd trust more to the Great Mazar of Chorazin than to any charm, or Teraphim. I've not been there now in a long time because I thought there was some good in the charm, and that's the cause of all our ill luck. I'll go to Chorazin to-morrow."

Again Joazer. "Thou wouldst do better to turn thy face to Jerusalem and pray to Jehovah,—blessed be His name,—than to trust in either charms or Mazars."

"That's all very good," answered Boaz, gruffly, "we all *pray* often enough, but you know yourself,—and I've heard you say so,—that Zebedee here, when a small lad, was cured of sore eyes, by being taken to the grove at Chorazin, and that things like the Teraphim of Rachel and Micah and the divining cup of Joseph are beyond price, if once you could lay hands on them."

Already the cry of what seemed a wild water fowl had come floating in from far out in the lake, but only Jesus, whose eyes had been all the time fixed dreamily on the expanse of waters, had heard it. Now, as it sounded again, he turned and asked the young man nearest to him, "What is it, Jehu?"

Many of the others heard the question, and all listened breathless till again the wild, weird cry came floating in, distinct and clear.

"Jacobus and the rest, by my head!" exclaimed Jehu,

starting up, and putting his hands to his mouth he imitated perfectly the sound they had heard. All eyes were now fixed on the lake. Jehu added some fresh fuel to the fire, and the leaping flames, driving back the shadows, brought out with wonderful distinctness every line and feature of the strange group about the fire. Its dazzling glare was reflected from rock-wall and boulders and revealed, looming dark out of the shadow, the jagged but still massive ruins of an ancient Canaanitish tower, one that had been taken and demolished by Joshua in the olden time. In the close foreground the boat of the fishermen, drawn up lightly on the sands, with the great net piled on its stern, we can see distinct in the blazing light; and beyond, receding gradually from dazzling light into utter darkness, lies the mystery of the sea.

In the breathless silence, the sound of muffled oars is heard; then, after an interval, the straining eye perceives on the edge of darkness the black hull and flashing oars of a craft swiftly approaching. And now we can see the forms of men laboring at the oars, and the glint of polished steel, and then they are with us about the fire, partaking with hearty welcome of our fisher's fare and talking gravely in low tones. What men they are! Clothed scantily with skins, armed, bearded, and hairy, with the thews and sinews of sons of Anak! They remind us of Joab, and Abner, and the Pelethites. Four of these young men are the sons of Judas, the grandsons of Ezekias. They will all be crucified or hewn in sunder, and their children after them, going down like falling stars in the holocaust of the last days. Under their vigorous attack, the last fish, the last crumb of barley bread has soon disappeared,—and the wine skin is empty.

The party have all seated themselves about the fire save one, and him you have noted from the first as the leader. Cold and deliberate in manner, with only the flashing eye to reveal the fire that burns within, he towers

among his fellows like Saul among the thousands of Israel. It is Jacobus, the renowned "robber," upon whose head the Romans have put a price. He eats nothing but barley bread, and drinks no wine. His black mane of hair falls in heavy, wavy masses to his bare shoulders, and we may know that he is a Nazarite; he is dedicate, and set apart. All wait for him to speak. At last, Jacobus addresses Joazer.

"How long, O Father of Zebedee, wilt thou halt between two opinions; are the young men Zebedee and Jehu to go with us, or no?" There was a tone of censure in the voice of Jacobus, and the old man met it with some resentment.

"Be it known unto thee, thou son of Judas, that Zebedee and the rest are of age; ask them."

"Such teaching ill becomes thee, Father Joazer," answered Jacobus, sternly. "The commandment with a promise is the last one a true Israelite should forget; the honor due a father does not terminate with the putting on of the Tephillin."

Joazer poked the fire with his staff, sending up a cloud of sparks, but he did not answer.

Jacobus continued: "Men, indeed, are the great need of the hour, but we want no deserters or runaways. Now, as in the time of Gideon, it is not numbers that count. Shall Zebedee go?"

The fire shining full in the old man's face revealed the distress that his voice, too, betrayed. "It needs not," he said at last, "that I repeat what I have told thee so often, that my heart and soul, like that of every true man in Galilee, is with thee wholly. It is impossible that any true son of Abraham should not wish thee all that thy heart desireth. But the sins of Israel are too many and too great. God has veiled his face from us, and we must bow our necks to the stroke. If thy grandfather Ezekias and Judas, thy father, both mighty men and with armies at

their backs, could not prevail, how thinkest thou with thy handful to do anything? Thou art but as a handful of grasshoppers, flying towards the sea, to be swallowed up in its waves. The heathen indeed rage, and the people imagine a vain thing."

Jacobus, who alone remained standing, did not answer for some time, and the Sphinx-like immobility of his intense Jewish face did not alter; his eyes seemed fixed and far away; there was a hush, as in the chamber of death.

"Is it numbers that give victory?" he asked at length; "we of this wicked and adulterous generation forget that it is Jehovah who is all, and man nothing. We shut our eyes to the whole history of Israel, from the crossing of the Red Sea to the present hour; never at any time was it numbers that delivered Israel. Our sins are indeed many and great; for ten righteous would God have saved Sodom; by three hundred men with Gideon He destroyed the host of Midian. Even by one man who was faithful has He often saved His people. Remember Samson, Ehud, and Shamgar. God never forgets his own. Talk not of the sins of Israel: who is without sin? Who among men sinned as did David? And yet God loved him *because he trusted in Him*. God betrays no trust! Let *us* only trust in God, and the Romans shall flee before us, as the grasshoppers upon the hills."

There was a silence of some minutes, while every listener, with head bent low, gazed motionless upon the dying fire. Jesus and Simon, looked from one to another of those about them in wonder.

At length Joazer spoke again. "Your words, O son of Judas, are words of truth and soberness; none can make answer. That the Messiah will surely come doubteth no man, nor that his time is near at hand; but until He cometh the heathen will prevail. What though like Judas the Maccabean thou shouldst drive out the Roman, as did he the Syrian, and enlarge the border of Israel and make clean the

inheritance of Jacob,—it is Shiloh alone who can restore and establish. The Maccabean ended in Herod.”

“And why did the Maccabean end in Herod,” asked Jacobus. “*Because he would be king.* From the days of Saul, the son of Kish, the Lord is wroth when a king is set up, and His wrath consumed them when David numbered the people. Shall the heathen Roman number us and escape unscathed? Shall God be mocked? No king but Jehovah, no tax but to the Temple, no friend but he who upholds this law, is what God requires. This is the Law as it came from God’s hand at Sinai, and as long as they kept it who stood before Israel? From whom did they flee? God does not change; He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

“If for ten righteous God would have saved Sodom, for lack of a host shall he destroy Israel? And who are they who say nay to this I speak? Who have set aside the word of God for the word of man and put tradition above the express command? Is it not they who wear soft raiment and live in king’s houses; who buy and sell their brethren, the sons of Abraham; who pray in the streets, and in their closets contrive how they may devour the widow and the orphan; who pay tithes and Roman imposts and parade their gifts into the treasury, and then extort from the poor far more than all they pay or give? It is these who prove by their traditions that the touch of one like us is to them pollution, that an egg laid on the Sabbath Day is unclean, and that the washing of hands is more than judgment and mercy and brotherly love.”

Another long pause, and again Joazer: “These are hard sayings, O son of Judas, and not to be denied. God will surely deliver His people; but when, knoweth no man. *Now* He has veiled His face from us. He sees not our shame; He hears not our cry. Time was when the very sons of Aaron, offering strange fire, were struck dead beside the altar; now the heathen Pompey, in armor and

bearing the abomination of images, may force his way beyond the veil and lay his sword, stained with Jewish blood, upon the very altar of God.

“Time was, as you say, when one could chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight; but it seems no longer so. Your grandfather was a holy man and had a following of thousands, each man as devoted as were the three hundred who went down with Gideon, and they were all slain. And there was the noble Athronges and his four brethren, who, with all that were with them, were cut down like the grass. And again, your own father, a holy man, whom many believed to be the true Messiah, with a noble army and all the spoils of Sepphoris in his hand, went down like the rest,—the soil, given by God to their fathers, soaking their blood. Could I forget the past and all these eyes have seen, it might be different. Forget!—”

And the old man reached out, clutching the air with his bony hands, while the wrinkles deepened into furrows on his parchment face, and his glittering eyes were raised to Heaven in imprecation. “*Forget!*” he repeated. “*No Israelite forgets! He only waits.* Could I forget the crosses stretching for miles along the road,—three thousand of them, with neighbors, friends, brothers, and a father writhing there in agony! My father seven days alive! Can I forget going there at midnight with my mother to give him drink, and seeing the heathen guard thrust her through with a spear? Thinkest thou, O son of Judas, that Joazer forgets?”

Again there was silence, broken at last by Joazer again. “Israel has indeed fallen upon evil days, and the measure of his woe is not yet full. Doth not the Scripture teach that there shall first be famines and pestilences, and signs in the sky,—wars, and the dead lying unburied, the food of dogs; and then will Emmanuel come, we know not the time. One thing only is sure: God’s promises never fail; the Messiah will come.”

"The Messiah is here now!"

"It is the Bath Quol," murmured Boaz, looking wildly round.

These words, clear, distinct, sonorous, fell upon the listening group like a voice from the sky. Jesus, who had arisen while Joazer was speaking, now stood before the fire, listening intently. The current idea of the coming Messiah was not new to him, for he had heard it discussed in his own home and at Uncle Clopas' from his earliest recollection. It was in the daily thoughts and prayers of all Jews, whether they lived in Jerusalem or were scattered to the ends of the earth.

"The Messiah is here now!"

When the men about the fire heard these words and looked up, their eyes fell first upon the figure of the young lad standing before the fire; its glow shone full upon him and, with the added light of the breaking dawn, illuminated his speaking face, shedding a glory upon his youthful beauty that none who saw ever forgot. There were tears in his eyes, and the expression of his glowing face was absorbed, intense, and utterly unconscious of being observed.

A shock, as from a lightning flash, thrilled through the group of men about the fire, and they gazed awe-stricken upon the lad. A moment later a dark-robed figure approached the fire and gravely saluted them; all rose at once, and turning towards the new-comer with bowed heads repeated the formula, "May your peace be great."

It was the Rabbi Sadduc, and all waited for him to speak: "Knowing you all as I do, and hearing the last words of Joazer, as I could not help doing, I cannot err in supposing that you have been talking of the Christ and his coming. And I said, 'He is here now.' It is well known to you all that I have made this subject the study of my life, and in answer to my prayers the Holy One,— forever blessed be His name,— has revealed to me, me, Sadduc the

unworthy, that somewhere here, or among the dispersed of Israel, the Saviour of His people now lives." All listened intently, and the venerable man went on to show, quoting from ancient writings and traditions, that the time was at hand.

"Moreover," he concluded, "even the heathen have received their warning; they have seen the writing upon the wall and, like Belshazzar, they quake and tremble before the coming of the Lord. Listen! Yesterday among the people of a caravan traveling from Damascus, while resting at noonday at the well, I happened upon the Rabbi Samuel, a man of authority, both in Jerusalem and at Rome, where he is a chief-ruler among the Jews, and this I received from him:

"A short time ago, while traveling by ship, from Joppa to Rome, his ship was strangely becalmed while off Corfu. For a long time it seemed immovably fixed in one place, and at last, when the stillness had become very oppressive and while all the passengers and sailors were on deck, watching and waiting, they heard a loud voice calling to the Egyptian helmsman Thammus, and it bade him say when he got to Palades that the Great God Pan was dead. This the helmsman did when they got to Palades; and at once there arose a great sound of crying and of grief in the air and from all the shores, insomuch that all were astonished and some fell down and lay like men dead.

"And the Rabbi said further that the great Roman writer Virgil, who is counted a great prophet among the Latins, has written of Him who is our hope, and says that He is now here. Further, the Rabbi declared that in Egypt that obscene bird of Trammuz, the ancient Phœnix, has appeared again, and for the last time; and even the Augurs of Rome, he says, admit that the mysterious bird is to bear away the expiring age, and that all things are to become new."

So intense was the interest in the Rabbi's words that no

one noticed the dawn brightening into day, and all were startled by the distant note of the horn sounding from the Synagogue at Capernaum, summoning the people to prayer. A moment later, and more near, the blare of a Roman trumpet announced that a cohort was thus early on the road from Sepphoris. All arose to their feet, and, led by the Rabbi, turned their faces towards Jerusalem, and with bowed heads and hands upon their breasts repeated together the well known prayer.

While they were praying the rim of the sun peeped above the far mountains of Bashan, and a shaft of dazzling light shimmered along the dark surface of the lake and illumined the stern faces of the praying group.

IV

NAZARETH

“God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.”—
JEWISH PROVERB.

The celebration of the Passover in the time of Jesus took place at Jerusalem in the month of April. It was the most honored of all the fifty-nine feast days that the Jews then kept each year in Jerusalem, and was the most largely attended. It celebrated the natal day of the Jewish people and was to them not only what the fourth day of July is to Americans, but, more and greater, it was the religious festival which commemorated the sealing of God's promises to Abraham. It was a holiday and, what is more, a holy day.

Moreover, the first day of the seven days' Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of First Fruits was also the Passover. Every male Jew of lawful age whose health and condition at all permitted was expected to attend this Feast. Women and children were not discouraged from coming, and hence the immense numbers that crowded to Jerusalem at this time. Josephus declares that there were often three million people assembled and two hundred and fifty-six thousand lambs sacrificed in one day at the Temple. When it is remembered that Jews from all over the known world came to this Feast, and that the population of Palestine itself was extremely dense, the numbers given are not incredible. Of course the greater number of those attending were from Palestine, and the distance required to be traveled by the most remote sojourners in the extreme north was scarcely one hundred miles, while populous Galilee and Nazareth itself were distant from Jerusalem but about sixty miles.

It is to the home of Jesus in Nazareth that we now journey. The Feast of the Passover is approaching, and here, as in every other Jewish home throughout the world, the question of going up to Jerusalem is being discussed. It is the time of the evening meal, the principal one of the day, and all are present, gathered about the one seething pot of herbs and vegetables that, together with black barley bread and a dish of curdled milk for each, makes up the meal.

It is a narrow, cramped house, low, one-roomed, and one-story, with no furnishing to speak of, except a great chest, heavy, iron-bound, and having the marks of extreme age. It contains the sacred rolls, genealogical records, and family heirlooms that have been handed down from father to son through many generations.

The family consists of the father, Joseph, a thin, spare, aquiline man of fifty, already wrinkled and gray, with hard hands and stooped shoulders; the mother, Mary, fresh, young, and fair, with a peaceful air, calm, cheerful, and pleasing; there are brothers and sisters, all older than Jesus, the children of Joseph by a former marriage. They are James and Jude and Michal and Doris. A pet lamb, given to Jesus by Uncle Clopas, completes the household.

"I am sorry we could not go to camp with the rest." It was Mary's mild remark to her husband, while the girls, Michal and Doris, were clearing away the few supper dishes.

"Oh, my dear woman, I have told you so many times that I didn't see how we could go at all, this time; how can you persist in your design?" The good man's face was set and hard, and though he evidently tried to speak kindly his voice betrayed the irritation of one worn and tired.

"Yes, I know it is rather hard for us, but you remember we didn't go up to the Feast of Dedication or of Tabernacles, or, indeed, to any feast at all, the whole year, for we said, surely we will go up to the Passover when Jesus is

of age. The older children can stay at home and do the work, and you certainly need the change and rest." The woman paused and hesitated, and then continued: "If only you would go and take Jesus, I could stay at home, too. Would you do that way?"

"No! no! Thou shalt go if any one," answered Joseph. "It is more to thee than to any one else. I would be glad if we all could go: it is God's own appointed Feast. But if the good Lord,—and blessed be His name,—has allowed the heathen to take away the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, if He has brought that day upon us when a man shall take hold of his brother, of the house of his father, saying, 'Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand,' when Jerusalem is ruined and Judah fallen because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of His glory, will not He forgive if we go no more up to see the desecration of His holy Temple?"

"Remember, my husband, it is not for us to sit in judgment, but only to obey. Was it not the obedience of our Father Abraham that brought the promise to His children?" The woman spoke firmly but mildly, at the same time laying her hand on her husband's arm.

"Thou art indeed another Hannah, and deservest to be blessed, my Mary; but the real truth is that we have no money to go up to Jerusalem, and the poor ass that shouldst carry thee and the gift,—alas, I am pained to tell thee!—but this day, as I fared homeward with the ass laden with my carpenter tools, I passed the stall of Shunam, that vile Publican. He hailed me, and demanded a shekel, so he said, for selling woolen yarn spun by my wife and daughters. He knew it was but yesterday I paid him my last penny to mend the bridges, as he said, so those who go up to the feast could pass. And so it is each year: he makes demand to mend the ways and all the poor are mulcted, but yet the ways are left unmended. And

now to-day, as I had nothing left, he took our good young ass and gave me in exchange an ass so old and broken, wheezy and lame, that it would be shame to lay any gift for God's altar upon it, and we should be more than ever hooted at by the Samaritans, and even the rude boys of Jerusalem. Thou wilt not forget how we were called Amhaaretz even by the servants of the High Priest when we last went up to the Feast."

Joseph's words were listened to with deep attention by all, and Jesus, with his lamb by his side, went and stood by his father, and took hold of his mother's hand; there was in the boy an air of intense interest and a sad, longing, wistful look in his great eyes as he fixed them steadfastly upon his father.

The mother put a loving hand on his head, smoothed back the wavy mass of hair, and stooped to kiss the pallid brow. "Father forgets sometimes that his boy cannot bear to hear such stories," she said soothingly, "but our son must learn to rise above such things, and remember that the best and bravest of Israel have been poor."

"I don't mind being poor, Mother; but for you and Father to suffer such insults and abuse! I don't want to go up to Jerusalem, and why need we? May we not worship God here at Nazareth as well as at Jerusalem? Don't you remember how the Lord loved and prospered Israel in the days of Samuel, when there was no Temple, and offerings were made almost anywhere? I wish we didn't have to go to Jerusalem."

"It is God's appointed way, my son. We cannot be excused, even if there are abominations at Jerusalem, and even if there be priests who do not always just as they should. They are the anointed of the Lord, and minister in His Holy Temple: it is not for us to criticise, but only to obey."

The mother kissed again fondly the brow of her son and smiled upon him proudly. No one spoke for a time, and

Joseph sat with fixed face, grimly staring at the rotting door-post, where the sacred Mezuzah had been nailed time out of mind. At length the mother continued. "As for the expense of going, the gift, and all, the girls and I have provided. The tax demanded of you to-day was for yarn really sold by us and we cannot deny it. The wool we got of brother Clopas, and spun it here at home, and now we have two shekels and five farthings which we have saved up for this very purpose,—and the lamb for the sacrifice, Jesus, I am sure, will let us have his in a case so urgent?" And the mother with both hands turned the boy's face up to hers, looked smilingly into his eyes, and again kissed him.

One hand of Jesus was resting on the lamb, which was pressing close to his side and nibbling at the hem of his garment. The boy did not answer but, stooping, gathered the lamb in his arms, sat down on a low stool, and hovered over it with a mother's fondness. The lamb laid its head on its young master's breast and closed its eyes in perfect content.

Again it was the mother who broke the silence: "We must remember that sacrifice is the primary law for God's people. It began with the giving up of the only son by our Father Abraham, and we know not where it will end. All first fruits are dedicate, and then if Jesus is to become a Rabbi we cannot longer delay his going up to hear the wise words of the good Hillel, and being instructed in the true way."

V

GOING UP TO JERUSALEM

"Every one wore festal clothes and not a few carried garlands and wreaths of flowers. Different bands united as they passed on, and flutes struck up as the cavalcade moved on to the chant."—
GEIKIE.

It is the day before the Passover, and the great company of pilgrims from Nazareth, Cana, and their neighborhood have come to a halt in that narrow valley known to moderns as Ain el Haramie. It is but a short distance out from Jerusalem; but by camping here for the night the grand entry into the Holy City may be made in the morning with due solemnity and form.

It is yet early afternoon, and there is ample time for the women and maidens and young gallants to make ready their ornaments, and to prepare their finest apparel for the great event of the coming day. Among the thousands that literally fill the narrow valley and swarm along the roadway far and near it would seem a hopeless effort to try to find our acquaintances of Galilee, if any of them perchance are here. They may be far up the valley or further along towards Jerusalem or, perhaps, not yet come up. But stop! Who is that giant standing to the left against that rocky wall, with the descending sun shining full in his face; he is dressed in sheep skins, with right arm and shoulder bare like a shepherd of the Jauran, and he carries his shepherd's crook. But the face and figure, the giant stature, and the mane-like hair falling about his shoulders are not easily forgotten. Yes, it is Jacobus, surely, and there too are the Rabbi Sadduc, Father Joazer, Zebedee and Jehu and Boaz, and many others with them whom we have not seen before. Yes! and there are Joseph and Mary his wife,

and Jesus with his lamb. How frightened the poor thing is by the crowd and the noise, pressing in fear against his young master.

If we push our way through the crowd and draw closer, we may learn more of this company. That fine Arabian mare which its Arab groom is so carefully washing from dust and road stains is the property of the rich man of Capernaum, Simon the Pharisee as, also, those sleek, well-fed mules the servants are unloading; and the great camel, with its superb houdah and its trappings of silver and gold ornaments and tinkling bells of silver, is the one on which his wife and baby ride. The driver is also an Arab, and there are some Greeks among his large retinue. The great tent of pure Egyptian linen, made in colors of snow-white, blue, and saffron, with fringes of purple and gold, is his; and that is Simon himself, with a roll of the Law in his hand, reclining luxuriously on his divan in the opening of his tent; and there is Potiphar, his Egyptian steward, who is salaaming respectfully before him to receive his orders.

And now, with much shouting to clear a way through the crowd, appears a man leading a large camel laden with wood, brought all the way from Mount Tabor and belonging, with the camel, to Simon. Another servant leads a fat ox for the Temple sacrifice. The load is very heavy, and the poor camel groans while it kneels for the servant to unload the wood. Some of it is for use here, where a fire is already being kindled in front of Simon's tent, and some for roasting the Passover lamb in Jerusalem. It is an expense that only the rich can afford, and the fire before Simon's tent is to show his hospitality and to invite an evening concourse of the Bathanim to pay their court to him.

The tent next to Simon's is that of Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue at Capernaum, but it is of plain camels' hair, and not so large and pretentious as that of Simon, with far less retinue and display,—the modest and orderly establishment of a well-to-do merchant and householder.

Let us turn now to seek our humbler acquaintances of Nazareth and the lake shore. Yes, here they are, against the wall of rock where we saw Jacobus standing; his tall figure still marks the spot like a tower among cottages. There are a few small tents of coarse cloth, but the greater part of the multitude are without shelter of any kind, and will sleep on the ground without other covering than the scant clothing they wear. There are a few sorry-looking donkeys, with flesh galled by the rough cords with which their heavy burdens have been bound, and among them the poor creature which Joseph was forced to take in exchange from Shunam. A number of boys are gathered about it, laughing and jeering, while Jesus is washing its wounds and feeding it with handfuls of grass gathered by the roadside.

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The sun, though not yet down, has ceased to shine in the rocky gorge of Haramie and the shadows are deepening. The Pilgrims have taken their evening meal. Simon, with Jairus and a few other invited friends, have supped sumptuously. The flesh of quails and kids, fresh fruits from Jericho, and wines from Hebron — it is not an elaborate feast, such as Simon would present to guests at home, but yet in strong contrast to the scanty fare of the great majority of those around him.

There is such scarcity of wood that few fires are to be seen, and these are of rich men, who, like Simon, have brought their fuel with them; but there is little complaint and much jollity. If we look within the tents of Simon and Jairus and all the large tents of the rich and well-to-do, we shall see all the young girls donning their gala dress and ornaments amid a babel of voices.

Meanwhile a level space in front of Simon's tent has been cleared and made smooth, and Simon himself has taken position on an elevated divan. And now at last the confused sounds within the tents are stilled and a bell rings.

Simon gives a signal to the tall, bearded Israelite at his side, who puts a silver horn to his lips and blows a clear, mellow note that sounds afar; similar horns also sound in the distance and others follow, still farther away.

At once from the tents of Simon and Jairus issue a company of young girls, resplendent in ornaments and gaudy fabrics, and arrange themselves in a semicircle, facing the divan of Simon. The daughters of the chief men are here, some the fairest in the land. All alike wear the head-dress of coins, with flowers everywhere,—wreaths and coronets and festoons of lilies, oleanders, orchises, and the odorous hennah, the clustering camphire of the Song of Songs. Of ornaments there is much variety,—gold, and silver, and beautifully colored glass made into necklaces and bracelets. Nose-rings and even anklets with tinkling bells are visible, for the lower legs are bare, as are the left shoulders and breasts. Light sandals of red morocco protect the bare feet.

When all is arranged, from the center of the group the tallest and most beautiful steps out and, throwing herself at the feet of the Great Man, says, “Rabbi, it is commanded by the word of the Lord, as delivered unto us by Jeremiah, His Holy Prophet: Thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets and shall go forth in the dances of them that make merry. If it will please thee, Rabbi and Master, these of thy household will obey the command.”

“It is well,” answers Simon. “Go forth, my children, and praise the Lord, as did David of old, in the song and in the dance.”

Meantime a company of young men, arrayed in their finest apparel, with tabrets, flutes, harps, cymbals, and castanets, have ranged themselves beside the trumpeter of Simon, and with him strike up and play as the dance begins. First, hand in hand in a circle, the dancers move slowly, singing, “Praise ye the Lord,” as in the 146th Psalm. Gradually the movement is increased till it becomes

rapid, when suddenly the leader, who at first bowed herself at the feet of Simon, breaks away from the others, and with one hand holding aloft a gilded tambourine, fringed with silver bells, and with the other dispersing with indescribable grace the gauzy drapery of her apparel, begins, — all still singing, — a new movement of intricate windings and bewildering turnings. The beholder is entranced by the billowy heave and swell of graceful, swaying bodies, the spray-like tossing of bare arms, the flash of dark, innocent eyes unconscious of their beauty, and red lips singing unfeigned praises to God. Many of the spectators join in the song, and nearly all clap their hands and make noisy demonstrations.

Conspicuous in the first rank, and near as possible to the dancers, are some of our acquaintances of Galilee, and particularly noticeable are the shaggy, towering figure of Jacobus, and close by his side, the lad Jesus; these do not join in the singing, or clapping of hands; though evidently interested, and even absorbed, they make no demonstration. Jesus still has the lamb by his side, but is unconscious of its presence and is rapt away, as would seem, in worshipful adoration.

But who is this leading figure among the dancers, whom our eyes involuntarily fasten upon, and follow more than all else? We may notice that Jesus and Jacobus and the rest all follow her with their eyes more than they do others; is it because she is more beautiful, more graceful and skillful than the others; because, in addition to her grace and beauty, there is about her an expression of unconscious, child-like innocence and purity? Perhaps! and yet it seems as though we had seen her before. When, and where? Ah, yes! We remember! She it is who was with Jesus on the mountains with the flocks of Clopas. It is the same Mary, the niece of Clopas, and now the servant of Simon, *Mary of Magdala*.

When the dancing is ended, it is almost dark; lamps are

lighted in and about the great tents and fires are kindled. Simon and Jairus and all the Bathanim put on their phylacteries and the Hazan, called up by Jairus, leads off in the appropriate religious service, which is much like that held every day in all synagogues: first, silent prayer, all standing, then the Reader, having put on his Tallith with the fringes, mutters the prescribed prayer that every child is taught to use whenever this garment is put on. Then follow other set prayers, the reading of the texts and passages of Scripture, the chanting of the Psalms, and the repeating by the whole congregation of the Shema and the eighteen Benedictions. It is a long and apparently a wearisome service; but attention does not seem to slacken, and the congregation lingers, apparently unsatisfied. At a sign from Jairus, the Reader turns to Simon and presenting him the roll of the Law, asks obsequiously, "Will not the Master favor the people with the words of his wisdom?"

Evidently Simon is not averse to the proposition and without delay and without rising begins: "'My Son, fear thou the Lord and the king, and meddle not with them that are given to change.' This passage from the Proverbs of the wise King is very applicable to our own times. Much discontent has been manifested in Israel with our present rulers, and especially with the numbering of the people; but it is written by Moses in the book of Numbers as a command of God: 'From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel, thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies,' and again in Proverbs it is said: 'An evil man seeketh only rebellion, therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him'; in Exodus it is written: 'Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the rulers of thy people.'"

With the first words of the preacher a deep silence fell upon the congregation, a silence, and with it a chill. As he proceeded, far back in the crowd a swelling hum of

voices began to be heard, and nearer, in the light of the fire and of the lamps, there were many dark Jewish faces scowling with awakening wrath.

"Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought," continued the preacher, "and curse not the rich in thy bed ch——." The last word remained unfinished, for a rotten egg thrown with unerring aim by some Zealot's hand far back in the crowd struck the preacher square on the mouth, followed by a perfect hail of similar missiles, sticks, and even stones, and accompanied by a tumult of angry shouts and cries.

And now, in a moment's lull, a mighty voice, that rings and swells and echoes along the rocky gorge: "No king but Jehovah; no tax but to the Temple; no master but God!" The divan of Simon is closed.

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When Jesus lay down on the ground that night near his father and mother he could not sleep. On this journey to Jerusalem he was continually seeing and hearing things which so wrought and stirred him up that he found little rest. Now from the rear of Simon's tent came a continuous low, rumbling sound, and in the same direction he could see the reflection of a fire. All about him the people were sleeping tranquilly. He arose and made his way towards the fire. Back of the great tents some distance he came upon the cause of the sound he had heard and the fire whose reflection he had seen. Quite a company of slaves of both sexes were gathered here, and among them Jacobus and Jehu. The men servants were busy grinding grain with small mill stones which they turned by hand. The women had pots and kettles of water on the fire and were occupied with washing and ironing the white garments, napkins, and table linen needed by the families of Simon and Jairus on the coming day.

They all appeared very tired and despondent; there were no songs, or words of cheer, only sighs, bitter complainings, and curses. Jesus spoke to several by name, and one old man

who appeared very weak and exhausted he almost forcibly relieved from grinding at the mill, turning it himself till the task was done. This work at the mill was wearisome labor, and slaves were put to it in the time of Abraham, to whom the custom had been handed down by the ancient Accadians from remotest time. The mighty Samson, put to the task by the Philistines, found it bitter enough, and with Milton to speak for him laments his cruel lot:

“To grind in brazen fetters, under task,
Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill with slaves.”

In Jesus' time there had been no change; nor has there been any since,—the same mills, the same grains, the same system of producing Dives and Larazus in an endless chain; the poor woman, the bondsman, and the debtor, old and broken at forty, are grinding to-day at the mills of Jericho as they did when the rams'-horns of Joshua smote its mighty walls in sunder.

When the grinding was done and the clothes washed it was near midnight, and all were tired,—some so exhausted that they had fallen asleep with hands still upon the handle of their mills. One poor woman with a babe had fallen, overcome with sleep, in a very cramped and uncomfortable position near the fire, with the babe tugging at her empty breast. Jesus, when he saw her, carefully straightened out her limbs, and covered her with a ragged cloth that lay near; the woman moaned, and clutched the baby closer, but did not awaken.

The news that Jacobus was here had been secretly spread about and there was a considerable company gathered about the fire. Achan the peddler was there, plying his trade; for poor and destitute as all the company were, they managed to find means to provide themselves with charms and amulets and such cheap jewelry as Achan displayed. There was also a company of Gibeonites from the mountains, carrying wood for fuel to Jerusalem. Jesus had no-

ticed them when they came in about night-fall, staggering painfully under their great crushing loads. The wood carriers were nearly all women and girls, with a few boys of about Jesus' age.

Jesus pitied them, and so found them out and talked with them when they first came up, and after hearing their story told them about Jacobus. He found that the wood-carriers, though their lives were very hard and laborious, were not bondsmen, but free, and lived in dens and caves in the mountains about Gibeon. They had to pay for their wood, though gathered with great toil and danger from steep mountain sides, and also a tax on every load that was brought within the gates of any city or town; besides, in Jerusalem they were often beaten and despoiled by the servants of the rich dealers in wood because the latter wanted all the profits themselves. These wood-carriers never had meat to eat, but lived for the most part on locusts and the coarse fruit of the carob tree.

When all were gathered about the fire, every eye was turned upon Jacobus, for many of them knew him, and the unuttered oath of the most desperate one died in his throat before the calm, rebuking glance of the Great Chief. "May God's peace be with you all," he said at length. "It is a long time since I could speak with any of you, and now I can little more than repeat what I have said so often before: Have patience! Wait! God's vengeance, like His justice, waits long, very long, sometimes; but it is sure. *It is coming!*"

"But, master, what good will the coming you speak of do to us, the poor, the debtors, and the bondsmen?" asked one. "We will have to fight and many of us to die, and if we win it will only be a change of masters; we already suffer more from Jewish taskmasters than from Roman taxes."

There was stern rebuke in the face of Jacobus as he answered severely: "Call no man Master! God alone is Master; and for that thou sayest, that such as thou

wilt gain nothing, it is to such alone that the promises are made. The Messiah, whose coming is at hand, is himself to be, as the prophet Isaiah saith, 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;' neither will he come with chariots and horsemen, like one great and rich, but as Zechariah declares 'riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass.' And again in Isaiah it is said of Him that 'He shall preach good tidings unto the meek, bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.' 'He is sent,' as Isaiah says, 'unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning,' and nowhere is it said that the great or the rich or the proud shall be partakers of his glory."

A silence followed, and then one asked: "But when, O Jacobus, are these things to be?" To which Jacobus answered by repeating what we have already heard told by Sadduc to the fishermen, and he further explained from Daniel how the sixty-nine weeks were about to be accomplished, repeating also long passages from the books of Enoch and Esdras, the Psalms of Solomon, and the Book of Jubilees.

It was very late when Jacobus ceased speaking, and the fire had smouldered to ashes. All the girls and boys except Jesus had gone to sleep, but many of the older ones, with grim, set faces, still listened intently.

"Watch and pray and faint not," said Jacobus, as he turned away, "and be ye ready when the trumpet sounds from the mountains of Bashan." At the moment someone stirred the fire, and the dying embers sent up a lurid flame that shone in the faces of the bearded and grizzly men and the haggard, care-worn women, revealing with ghastly distinctness the forms of the sleepers. A fair young girl among the wood-carriers had fallen asleep on her load. Tears had made furrows through the road dust on her olive cheeks, and the stains of blood were on the bare shoulders

where the cords had bound her load. As the fire-light flashed full upon her, she turned and moaned and opened her eyes to meet the gaze of Jesus fixed upon her in pitying love. She thrilled at his glance, and the wondrous eyes that looked down into hers she never forgot.

When Jacobus and his companions departed Jesus went with them; and as they passed along Jacobus put his hand on Jesus' shoulder and said, "Thou shouldst be one of us, my son."

Jesus answered, "I do not yet know."

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Meantime the Passover Pilgrims were pouring into Jerusalem through every gate and all the highways were thronged. The road leading northward from the Damascus gate, draining as it did most populous Galilee, was crowded with Pilgrims. Side by side with the merchant prince from Damascus, Alexandria, or Antioch, looking down haughtily from his luxurious houdah and attended by a numerous retinue of servants and slaves, trudged the skin-clad shepherd of the Hauran, driving the flocks of his master to be sold for the Temple sacrifice. Pharisee and Sadducee, Priest and Levite were here, each in proud separation from the common herd; furloughed soldiers from Sepphoris and Cæsarea; despised publicans from the marts of Galilee; robbers, bandits, and zealots from the fastnesses of Perea; peddlers of amulets and charms; fruit and wine vendors; pimps and harlots impelled by the desire to obtain absolution for past sins, and to procure indulgence for sins to come.

There are also great numbers of Galilean fishermen in the throng. They were very numerous in Jesus' time: we read of them fifty years later attacking the capital city of Tiberias, plundering the palace of Antipas, and fighting Vespasian himself in a great naval battle on the waters of Galilee. Like all fishermen since time began, they are bold, hardy, and warlike, but ignorant, superstitious, and

clannish. This company of them, with whom we see Boaz and Jehu and Zebedec, all wear short swords and daggers under their abas, and their talk abounds in argot peculiar to their lake and their calling. This, with their open profanity and general air of "uncleanness," puts a gap between them and the gorgeous retinue of this merchant Prince Sanballat from Damascus, who, mounted on a superb dromedary, rides abreast. Unlike the shepherds and poor peasantry, these fishermen seemed not to be overawed by pretentious splendor; they indulge like boisterous school-boys in free badinage with the Prince's servants, and ogle the carelessly veiled maids and women attendants, even staring openly at this other robed figure who, with an attendant maid, rides in the Prince's retinue. Her camel is even more richly caparisoned than the Prince's own, and she herself is gorgeously appareled. She reclines upon cushions, Tyrian-dyed and spangled with fringes of gold, and is screened from the sun by a curiously inwrought baldachin of silken fabric that cost its weight in gold.

Through the open basketwork of her houdah may be seen her small bare feet, the toes flashing with precious stones and her ankles circled with rings of rare design and workmanship. From time to time her veil is allowed to be blown aside, revealing a bold, haughty face of the Moabite cast, painted and rouged, with ear and nose rings of gold, and heavy necklaces with pendants of pearls.

"By the Splendor of God," said Boaz to his companions, "she is no daughter of Israel; she has been bought with a price."

"Aye," answered Jehu, "and by the Temple of God she will be found in the Court of the women offering sacrifice, and will eat of Paschal Lamb as if she came from the purest stock of Jacob. By the horns of the Great Altar, I like not such proselyting."

The throng is becoming more and more dense as we approach Jerusalem, and the roads more crowded. San-

ballat's armed retainers have thus far been able to clear a way for the Great Man, and many a humble Israelite of the purest blood, from David and Aaron down, has been rudely jostled and cuffed and his poor belongings overturned and scattered by these hired partisans. The poor peasantry are helpless against impositions and even violence, and give way without resistance or protest. Not so with the Galilean fishermen. Jacobus and his three brothers have now joined them, and together they make a band not lightly to be provoked.

"Give way and fall back yourselves, if you do not like our company," cries Boaz, boldly facing Sanballat's henchmen, who with their spears are pricking back the multitude, that the Great Man and his household may pass.

"Back! back! you unclean dogs. Have you no reverence for a Master in Israel?"

"May God curse thy great grandfather, fellow, for that speech!" growls Jehu.

"We know no Master in Israel but God."

"And at least we have as much right to the way as Moabite harlots and Ishmaelite spearmen," adds Zebedee.

But with the crowd mainly passive and even the fishermen somewhat awed and on the defensive, Sanballat's retinue continues to force its way ahead and is soon lost to sight in the throng.

A considerable distance forward another scene characteristic of the times is being enacted. Jerusalem, though still distant, is in full view, with its walls and battlements and towers, its splendid palaces, and, above all, its Temple of God, whose huge bulk and lofty domes and towers of clear, white, polished marble and plates of purest gold glancing in the sun kindle in every Jew the fires not only of religious devotion but of patriotic love. With this glorious sight coming into view, the vast concourse of Pilgrims has begun the chant, accompanied by the sound of flutes and other instruments, of those songs of degrees sung by

the choirs of David in the first Temple. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."

While the song, in which ten thousand voices join, is being sung, a squadron of Roman cavalry is approaching from an intersecting by-path. The standard bearer, in advance, shouts fiercely to the crowd of Pilgrims to open a way, and the trumpeter sounds a loud, warning blast on his trumpet; but the crowd seems like a flock of sheep threatened by wolves, dazed and terrified,—and with only time for a partial scattering, a wild and hasty crowding this way and that, the great war horses, without slackening their hard trot, crush through the defenceless throng and disappear towards Joppa in a cloud of dust.

For a moment the Song of Ascent is silenced, and bitter execration, mingled with screams and groans, takes the place of song; but as no Scribe or Rabbi, no person of rank or quality, has been injured, only a score or so of poor peasants, the unclean rabble, the affair is of small account. Our friend Simon the Pharisee is close at hand and commands that the march be at once resumed and the song continued. "For," as he remarks to Jairus, who is at his side, "the service of the Lord is more to be considered than the lives of a few peasants," and he strikes up again: "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.' Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem."

Meantime the friends of the dead and wounded, and of those whose goods have been broken and scattered, are doing what they can. There are some with bruised and broken limbs, a few are dying, and one is already dead. Joseph, with Mary and Jesus, is here,—Joseph with a ghastly wound upon the temple, and Mary with her dress torn and disordered, and the poor ass knocked helpless, never more to rise. Close by, a poor Gibeonite woman is

sitting upon her load of wood and holding in her arms her dead boy. His breast lies bare in the sunshine, plainly revealing the spot where a war-horse's iron heel has crushed his heart. It is pollution for the churchly Jew to touch a dead body, much more a despised Gibeonite; and so Simon and Jairus pass by, singing the songs of Zion without even turning their eyes upon the sickening scene. Following close upon Simon and his retinue comes Sanballat and all his train. They, too, are singing: "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us. Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul. Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth."

But Sanballat does not pause, and there is no pity in his eye; his singers and flute-players are of the loudest and clearest, and they look neither to the right nor to the left. And now come on Jacobus and his brethren and the fishermen of Galilee. Without a moment's hesitation they stop, and turn aside. "By the very God of Israel," growls Jacobus, "had we been here the Roman would have paid dear for this." There is much swearing and cursing among these rude fishermen, but with active and efficient aid they help to gather up the scattered goods. The fruit-peddler, whose whole stock has been destroyed, is consoled with a small gift of money; the seller of charms has his own gathered up and restored to him; the wounded are bound up and cared for.

Meanwhile Joseph, with Jesus helping, is pulling and lifting at the poor ass to get it on its feet. Mary, torn, bruised, and disheveled, is sitting by on the ass's saddle and furnishings, which have been removed. The lamb, which seems never to leave Jesus' side, crowds against his feet and seems nearly distracted by the noise and confusion.

And now come Jacobus and Boaz. With sturdy arms they lift the ass to its feet; for a moment it braces itself and tries to take a step, but the poor legs tremble and waver, and with a groan it goes down again in a heap, its mouth filled with dust. Its pilgrimage is ended; it is dead.

The Gibeonitish woman during all this time has not stirred, but sits immovable, with her dead boy in her lap,—silent, tearless, the picture of despair. The fishermen, with Jesus and Jacobus, gather around; Jesus draws near, and, touching the woman's hand, is the first to speak. "Woman, thy sorrow is great, but these here are thy friends. Where abidest thou?" The woman raises her eyes to meet the compassionate gaze of Jesus, and smiles. She seems dazed and helpless.

"Take up the child, Zebedee, and carry it where the woman will lead, to her home." It is the venerable Joazer who speaks, and he continues: "Supply from thine own purse all her necessities, and we will carry her fagots on to Jerusalem."

And so Zebedee took up the dead boy and Jacobus the load of fagots, and went towards Jerusalem; and the other, with the woman, went towards the mountains of Gibeon.

VI

AT THE TEMPLE OF GOD

"It were easy to add from Rabbinic sources repulsive details of their luxuriousness, wastefulness, gluttony, and general dissoluteness."—EDERSHEIM.

It is afternoon of the same day, and we are in the Temple inclosure at Jerusalem; we have heard much of this wonderful structure and had expected great things, but we are amazed at the size and magnificence. Two hundred and ten thousand persons may stand within its walls, and to-day it is crowded to suffocation with a busy, moving throng. Two hundred and fifty-six thousand lambs are to be slaughtered and certain parts of them burned in sacrifice on the Great Altar between three o'clock in the afternoon and nine at night. The greater part of the lambs are sold here in the Temple by dealers who divide profits with the priestly ruler. This is true also of the money changers, who provide the required coinage of the sanctuary in exchange for the various coins from all over the world, charging a heavy discount, which is part of the revenues of the High Priests.

But here come Joseph and Jesus with the Galilean fishermen. "By the Great Mazar of Chorazin," we hear Boaz saying, "they say that this new High Priest Annas, whom the Romans have set up, has got a corner on lambs, and we shall have to pay five shekels for a poor little runt not worth one."

"Boaz, Boaz!" cries out Joazer, warningly. "Remember where thou art, and swear not, or the fate of Dathan and Abiram may overtake thee."

"Well! by the —"

"Hush! hush, swear not at all."

"Well! by the a — a — a — how can one help swearing when he sees such robbery and gluttony: just look at these Priests, every mother's son of them, they say, is a glutton and a wine bibbler, and they look it. By the a — a — a — well, just look at them, sleek and fat, with bellies on them like wine skins — filled, they say, with lambs-fries and wine of Engedi."

The stalls of these bankers are in a long row against the wall. They are magnificently furnished and decorated, and on the tables of polished jasper and lazuli are heaped up pyramids of shining coins. Behind, lolling on luxurious divans, are the watchful proprietors, while hawk-eyed and nimble-fingered clerks deal out exchange to the restless crowd. Growls and complaints and occasionally smothered oaths are heard among those who have passed the changers and are now anxiously counting their money; but the moving throng, like a river, sweeps them along.

And now we are there ourselves. Joazer presents some worn shekels of Galilee and Jehu some Tyrian coins, Jacobus and his brethren money of Perea and Damascus, and now Boaz with some coins of Persia that he has taken in traffic with caravans from the far East. The clerk sounds the coins on the jasper counter, then weighs them on tiny scales, and flings them into a box under the counter. Boaz marks it all suspiciously, and when he receives his exchange, he refuses to pass on until he has counted it.

"Pass on," cries the clerk, reaching out a hand and pushing him away.

"No, I'll not pass on," cries Boaz, clinging to the counter. "You have cheated me, and I'll not pass on till you have given me my dues, or at least given me back my own money."

"You have all that belongs to you, so get along: come, don't you see how you are keeping the people back?" and again the clerk gives Boaz a push.

All the companions of Boaz have now paused and turned

back, and Joazer pleads with him to let it go and come on. "It's no use," he says, "and we'll all be arrested if you make any disturbance."

"By the Great Mazar of Chorazin, let them arrest! The devil take me if I budge an inch till I have my dues."

By this time Boaz and his contention have begun to attract pretty general notice, and there are cries of encouragement on every hand: "Don't let 'em beat ye, brother:" "Stick up for your rights:" "They're a lot of thieves any way, brother, make 'em shell out." Evidently the situation is becoming somewhat alarming, and the clerk turns to speak a few words in a low tone to the man reclining on a divan in the back part of the stall. He has been idly conning his daily mikhtabhin (newspaper) and now comes forward, paper in hand. Like the priests who swarm everywhere, he seems a well-fed individual, showing a broad and full expanse of chest and abdomen, with white cushiony hands, garments of extreme fineness and somewhat Grecian in style, and a profusion of jeweled rings and other ornaments.

We may note that the language we now hear spoken by the banker and his clerk, and indeed by all the Judeans and Jerusalemites, is quite different from what we have been used to in Galilee. To these Jerusalemites the idiom of Joseph and Jesus, of Boaz and Jacobus is a barbarous *patois*; and the rude and simple Galileans are, as is plain to see, regarded in Jerusalem much as the green Irishman is in London, or the southern tar-boiler in Wall Street. Not only their speech but their garb and manner "bewrayeth" them.

Our portly banker evidently has great contempt for Boaz and fixes his eyes upon him with great haughtiness and severity; but Boaz does not flinch, and the great man speaks, majestically waving the hand in which he still holds his newspaper. "Move on, sir! Move on at once,

or I'll have you arrested. You rubbish, you vile country bumpkin, get out I tell you!"

"Have me arrested, will you? By the Great Mazar of Chorazin, I'll pull this gilded den of yours down about your ears if you don't give me back my own."

The great man evidently scorns to bandy words with the unclean rabble, and with a sign from him the dapper clerk hurries out through a back door, leaving the banker alone. The mob that begins to press almost violently against the stall with wild cries of encouragement for Boaz and curses for the money-changers, increases steadily in size and boldness; it seethes and roars about the stall in true Oriental fashion, and every moment augments the dangers of a riot. "Stand for your rights, brother:" "Don't let them scare you:" "They are a pack of thieves, anyway," and so on, are cries heard on all hands; but the banker seems unconcerned and turns again to the reading of his newspaper.

Meantime all of Boaz's friends have gathered close about him, and Jehu and others even lay hold upon him to draw him away, but Boaz will not move. A moment later a near by door is thrown open, and through it pour in a company of sturdy athletes, flourishing heavy clubs, which they begin at once to use on the crowd with little respect or discrimination, opening a way to Boaz. "The clubmen of Annas!" "The clubmen of Annas!" is repeated from mouth to mouth with curses and execrations — but no one dares resist. The carrying of arms within the Temple area being strictly prohibited the multitude, like a flock of sheep, are helpless before the onslaught and are quickly dispersed with many bloody heads and bruised shoulders.

Boaz, though protected in a measure, is cruelly beaten, and even Joseph gets a whack that, added to the wound he received from the Roman soldiers, gives his face a look that might be mistaken for that of a robber or a malefactor. Even Jesus, boy though he is, escapes blows only through the courage and giant strength of Jacobus: at the critical

moment he puts an arm out and, wrenching the club from Jesus' assailant, with a blow from his open palm sends him sprawling and helpless, no more to swing a club at this Passover. There are no arrests made, for these clubmen are not the Temple Guard but only the irresponsible apparitors of the High Priest — henchmen and retainers like those of a mediæval lord, who, having made their foray and disciplined the mob, return again to their kennels. We learn later that not only these bankers but this whole brood of traffickers in doves, lambs, and he-goats, whose stalls line the outer courts of the Temple, are tributaries all of the High Priestly families of Jerusalem, and are protected by them in all sorts of injustice and extortion.

But to return to Boaz and his friends. They are indeed "perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed." After all they have suffered we might suppose they would go away without paying their dues or offering their sacrifices. Boaz, it is true, declares himself done with the whole business and ready to cast off the dust of his feet against Jerusalem and all there is in it; but other counsels at last prevail and the changeless habits of the Jew again assert themselves.

"Our debt," says Joseph, pleading with Boaz, "is not to these degenerate priests, the servants of Rome, but to the Lord God of Sabaoth. We must remember that God's anointed, even in earlier and better times, were sometimes sons of Belial. The Law tells us of Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron himself, and of the vile sons of Eli; and the prophet Hosea says: 'As troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent; for they commit lewdness,' and the words of Malachi also: 'Saith the Lord of Hosts unto you, O priests that despise my name and offer polluted blood and the lame and the blind for sacrifice;' but if the priests *are* vile and the Temple of God polluted, it does not excuse us from the requirements of the Law."

Our Galilean friends have retired since their drubbing to a remote corner in the portico, where after washing away the blood and applying such bandages as are to be had they again sally forth.

First and above all, the sanctuary dues and tithings must be paid,—these tithes were commuted for the most part in money, and besides, the poll tax of a common shekel or a half shekel of the sanctuary for men, and something less for women, children, and slaves had to be paid. These dues must be paid into the Treasury, which is another great banking establishment situated in the portico of the outer court. Its magnificence,—even its approaches and outward adornments,—are such as to fill with amazement our simple friends of Galilee, and in silent awe they pay their dues over the inlaid counters to the gorgeous and haughty clerks.

And now with all else done, comes the all important provision for the Feast of the Passover. As no more than twenty persons, at the utmost, are allowed to sit down to one lamb, two lambs at least must be provided for the company of Joseph,—one besides that which they have brought from Nazareth, and which still follows closely by Jesus' side. The dealers in lambs and sheep, doves, oxen and goats have their offices here in the portico. While Joazer and the others go to purchase a lamb, Joseph, with Jesus and his lamb, go to seek the Temple official who inspects all offerings, and whose certificate of soundness is necessary before any animal can be offered in the Temple.

After a brief absence our Galilean friends again assemble in the Temple court, near the great altar of burnt offerings. It is a terrible scene. The sun has gone down, and it is dark without; but here within this vast inclosure it is as light as day. On the great altar, seventy-five feet square and twenty-three feet high, the fat of ten thousand lambs is burning, sending up a column of flame that with lurid tongues rises hundreds of feet in air,—a beacon

visible to the mariner far out on the blue Mediterranean and to caravans beyond the Jordan and the Dead Sea.

A thousand priests are officiating. There is utmost haste, noise, confusion,—a babel of human voices, the bleating of lambs, the blare of trumpets, ram's-horns, and all kinds of instruments. For six long hours, five hundred lambs a minute have their throats cut here, and long lines of priests pass the fat of the lambs from the blood-reeking shambles up to the great altar for burning, while other lines pass the blood in golden bowls to be poured out before God. Blood, blood everywhere. The priests' hands, and even their faces, are red with it, and their whole garments are smeared and coated like butchers' togs. The great fire on the altar paints every object with a lurid glare, and the faces of the priests and of the excited crowd, with the smell of blood long in their nostrils, seem indeed fit ministers of that jealous God who is angry with the wicked every day, and whose fury is poured out like fire; and over all and through all, the barbaric noise of rams'-horns, trumpets, tom-toms, psalteries and sackbuts.

It is a scene to call up thoughts! We remember that these dark-browed Jews are sprung from the same stock as the Phœnicians, Ninevites, and men of Sodom, and we call to mind those human sacrifices of the first-born we saw in Sodom before the fire came down; in Carthage when Scipio was at her gates; and in Tyre while the hosts of Alexander encompassed her round. Jesus, too, has thoughts! When his lamb is taken from him to be butchered, struggling and bleating, he turned away faint and sick at heart.

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After Jesus found John at the Feast the two boys became inseparable. John, from being often in Jerusalem with his father, knew the city well, and especially the Temple and its service. Most of the Pilgrims had left for their homes by the end of the third day, and the regular daily sacrifices at the Temple had been resumed. Jesus

had expressed a desire to see an entire day's rites, and the two boys, separated from their families, had slept on the Temple terrace and were ready to enter when the blasts of the trumpets announced that the gates were open.

The lamps in the Temple were burning, for it was still quite dark, and with the glow from the fire which still smouldered on the great altar they gave light enough to reveal its general interior. Although much had been done to cleanse the Temple of the Passover slaughter, it still had more the appearance of a great abattoir than of a place of worship and of prayer.

Some yawning Levites, half asleep, were perfunctorily going through the forms of cleansing the altar, but through many repetitions their tasks had evidently become monotonous and ill-performed drudgery. Now that the crowds were gone the chief priests were not likely to come to make inspection until the approach of the next great feast; and so the priests and Levites, whose business it was to clean and furbish and make ready for the morning sacrifice, dawdled and talked. One began to tell of a scene of lewdness he had witnessed among the Passover Pilgrims. "Better hush up on that!" said another, in a low voice, "one of those boys is Zacharius' brat, and he'll tell the old man of you, sure." "Naw he won't! he's been around here before," and the story went on with cessation of work and restrained laughter.

A moment later and the call of the sentinel on the high roof of the Temple announced that, far away, Hebron was visible in the dawning light, and there was a bustle of preparation for the morning sacrifice. A new company of priests now appeared from the inner court. The duties of these priests were various and were assigned by lot, some to make the offering of incense in the holy place and some to kill and prepare the sheep for sacrifice. John explained it all to Jesus, and told him that these priests had already washed their feet and hands four times that morning and were very

holy; but Jesus could not help noticing by the light of the many torches that even the priest whose lot it was to enter the holy place and make the offering of incense had a dirty, red face and bleary eyes.

Meanwhile a sheep from the pen in the Temple was brought to the north side of the great altar and its head turned towards the west. Here twenty-four representatives of the people, as explained by John, were to put their hands on its head before it was slain in token of its being the devotional act of the whole people. When the sheep was brought out, there seemed to be some delay. The twenty-four representatives had not appeared, and Jesus turned to John for an explanation. "Yes," said John, "it often happens so, and this is one of the things that Father mourns over, not a little, and he says that such things cannot endure for long without God's vengeance being visited. You see," he continued, "that the Law requires these twenty-four representatives to be grave and reverend men, and that they shall remain in the Temple while on duty; but instead, the representatives are often men drunken and dissolute, and to make it appear that they sleep in the Temple they do as associations of rich men here in Jerusalem do about meeting together and having banquets on the Sabbath. These rich people, Father says, put a chain across each end of a street in which a group of them live and pretend that by so doing they make the whole street a single dwelling, and so they can all get together and have a good time on the Sabbath. And so these twenty-four representatives, who object to staying in the Temple twenty-four hours, join a house outside by chains and pretend that the house becomes a part of the Temple. — But here they come."

The twenty-four, aroused at last by repeated messengers, now came in. Their appearance clearly indicated that they had just been aroused from sleep, and some bore very visible marks of dissipation.

By the time the sheep was prepared for burning on the altar the first beams of the rising sun were shining with dazzling splendor on the polished marble and gold of the Temple pinnacle, and at the same moment a babel of confused sounds arose from every quarter. From the nearby castle of Antonia, the martial blare of Roman trumpets mingled with the blasts of rams'-horns, blown by a company of Levites about the Great Altar, to which was joined the deep roll of the great Temple organ, with citherns, harps, and cymbals, the singing of psalms, and the voice of prayer. There were only a few worshippers in the Temple besides Jesus and John; but without, in the street and the market place, the devout worshipers, with Tephillin bound to arm and forehead, were loudly repeating the "Shema" which begins, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is One God."

VII

THE YOUNG CARPENTER

"The ethics of government are identical with the ethics of war."—
HERBERT SPENCER.

Four years have elapsed since the occurrence of the events just narrated. During this period a few incidents had taken place which should be noted here. Joseph, the father of Jesus, had returned from the Passover-Feast wholly exhausted and broken. For the poor, the journey to Jerusalem was at best an arduous undertaking. The long march in dust and heat, the excitement of dangers and perils, the press of thronging multitudes, the loss of sleep made of it a trying ordeal. Added to all this for Joseph and Mary was the three days' anxious search for their lost boy. When at last they were ready to start again, all their Galilean friends had gone ahead, and they were obliged to travel alone. And so, passing through Samaria, alone and unprotected, they were set upon by some of those despised and hated countrymen, and were despoiled and beaten. When at last they arrived at Nazareth they were all in sad plight, and Joseph especially. He was entirely broken, and died in a few days after reaching home.

He left nothing but the few tools of his carpenter's trade, and the family were entirely destitute. Of the two girls, Michal at once married an obscure tradesman of Nazareth, while Doris, the younger sister, always of frail health, had become a confirmed invalid, helpless and bed-ridden. James, the elder brother, had also married and gone to a home of his own. Jude, more thoroughly inoculated with the extreme doctrines of Jacobus and his party, had with his cousin Simon secretly joined the Zealots, and by the roving life which he led was more a

burden than a help in the family economy. Jesus was thus left, at an early age, as the sole support of his mother and sister. It had ever been the pious wish of Mary that Jesus should be a Rabbi. His extraordinary aptitude for learning had encouraged her in this, and if Joseph had lived Jesus no doubt would have been sent to Jerusalem to perfect himself in Rabbinic lore,—to become in due time a second Hillel or Gamaliel, a main pillar of the established order.

And so doth God order events in this mad world of ours. Man at the utmost stretch of his boasted reason faintly sees law therein, when oft 'tis seen the fate of a world hangs upon the turning of a hair: an ant tugging persistently at a grain of corn revives the courage of a despairing hero and he arises to subdue a world; a spider spins her web across the mouth of a cave, and lo! there is born of it the revolution of two continents and the religion of one-third of mankind. Jesus the son of Joseph, instead of going to Jerusalem to study the learning of the schools, stayed at home to dig in his mother's garden and ply a carpenter's plane,—whence sprang a new era, and the Brotherhood of Man.

Having been much with his father and having worked with him, Jesus had learned much of his trade, and though still very young was able to earn a daily wage. When it is remembered that in the East boys of thirteen and girls of eleven are considered of marriageable age, this is not very surprising. Jesus, if not sturdy and muscular like his cousin John, was agile and quick to learn, and, more than all, had developed a wonderful taste and aptitude for wood carving and ornamental work: some of his designs in lilies and pomegranates had attracted the attention of the great architect Botheric, who was building the capital city of Tiberias for Antipas; and Jesus had already been asked to come there and do some interior decorative work under masters. At present, he is working under the Rabbi

Sadduc, and like other apprentices, doing work for which the master gets most of the pay.

It is the home of Simon the Pharisee at Capernaum. Simon was called a Pharisee because his father before him had been an active and prominent member of that fraternity, but was really more of a Sadducee than a Pharisee; his theology may still have retained the tone and caste of Pharisaism, but his politics was decidedly Sadducean.

Like the rich and aristocratic of all times and places Simon was averse to political agitation and change. He was prosperous himself, and he averred that the country was prospering under Roman government and preferred to let well enough alone. He cultivated the friendship of the Roman centurion who commanded the garrison at Capernaum and had sought the acquaintance of the rich Roman Honorius, who, as friend of Antipas, was building a superb winter residence at Tiberias.

To sufficiently deserve such high associations Simon is enlarging and improving his own residence and its surroundings. His house and grounds are already among the finest and most luxurious in Palestine. The house, on elevated ground, faces the lake and is separated from it by extensive gardens and groves of almond, palm, and orange trees. At the foot of the garden a sea-wall of massive black basalt protects from erosion, and within a small basin inclosed by stone piers a twenty-oared pleasure galley rides at anchor. It is a beautiful morning in the month of May, and the well-kept garden is aglow with color and redolent with perfume. Birds of brilliant plumage and delightful song flit among the trees and shady bowers. In an obscure corner of this garden we find Jesus at work alone, carving some designs in wood. He has changed much since we last saw him. He is a man now, tall and straight, with a great shock of wavy brown hair which is his only head covering and a thin beard upon which no razor has fallen. He has made no Nazarite vow,

but out of admiration and love for his cousin John he has adopted that habit without any plan or object, and without any of the extreme self-denials required of the Nazarite or Essene. He is like Adam in Paradise, a natural man. Then, too, like every free young animal that God has made, he is full to overflowing with lusty life, and like other creatures in youth and spring-time, he utters himself in song. It is not a set psalm of Asaph or the Sanctuary, but a wild heart melody, such as David sang to his harp, such as the Skalds and Ossian sang to the storm blast and the sea. And what a voice! We stand behind this mass of blooming roses and listen in wonder. A voice not now raised to a loud and high key, but capable of every pitch and tone. True to his Jewish culture and to his ancestry of a thousand years, Jesus is thinking of the Messiah and the deliverance of Israel. He is rehearsing to himself the teachings of the Rabbis, and with him, as with the true minstrels of all ages, his thought voices itself in song.

“How beautiful is the King, Messiah. Like Adam, and Abraham, and Solomon, whose stature was above the tops of the mountains, he girds his loins and orders the battle against his enemies. He slays their kings and their chief captains; he makes the mountains red with the blood of his slaughtered foes. His robes dyed in their blood shall be like the skins of the purple grapes. For a year shall the beasts of the field feed upon the carcasses of their slain, and for seven years shall the birds of the air devour them. Then, too, will Jerusalem be purified and made glorious. The mountains of Sinai, of Tabor, and of Carmel shall be the pillars of her gates. Damascus and Antioch shall be her doors. Angels shall cut the stones of her battlements. They shall tower above Hermon and reach the clouds.

“Out of her holy mountain shall flow rivers of pure waters, and there will be no more drought.

“Every good plant and tree shall flourish, and their flowers and fruit be renewed each day, forever.

“The stalks of corn shall be like palm trees, and every grape shall yield wine like a cask.

“Then shall sickness and sorrow be unknown, and the pure worship of God be established throughout the earth.”

Here the rhapsody of Jesus is interrupted by the sound of the lash and screams of pain. Outside Simon's garden, separated from it by an impenetrable hedge of thorny cacti, is the great fish mart of Capernaum. Here the Greek Hippo, by bribes and flattery of the Rulers, has acquired a monopoly of the trade and grown immensely rich, so it is said, by usury and extortion. Hippo is seldom seen in person at Capernaum; he spends much time in Rome and Antioch, and now, to please Antipas, he is building for himself a magnificent villa at Tiberias.

Hippo owns many slaves, some of them Hebrews, and it is one of these, a woman as well as Hebrew, that Hippo's steward is subjecting to the lash. Jesus can not get over the hedge, but there is a little opening where he can peer through, and he cuts away some of the thorns with his carving tool. Then he thrusts his hand through and waves it, shouting “Ho there, you! stop that!” The man with the scourge pauses with the whip uplifted in the air; he hears the voice and sees the waving hand. Fear of he knows not what lurks continually in the heart of any man under such circumstances, and the man is afraid; he unties the cord which binds the woman to a stone post and lets her go. She has been stripped to the waist and the blood flows down her bare back; as she drags herself along past the place where Jesus stands, she casts a timid but grateful glance towards the opening, but she can see no one. Jesus goes back to his work: but he no more sings.

The picture of the agonized haggard face and the bleeding back remains with him, and haunts him like a ceaseless cry. At first it seems as if he *must* find wings to fly over the hedge and destroy the heathen persecutor, as Moses did

the Egyptian. All the hot blood of a hundred generations boils within him. Every oracle and tradition of his people from the beginning of time has inculcated the teaching of vengeance. Shall not the Hebrew woman be avenged? For a moment there is a wild dancing light in the young man's eyes, and he clutches the iron carver he holds in his hand with a threatening gesture. Then he sinks down on a stone bench, resting his face in his hands, with the great mass of his hair falling about him unheeded.

Now there is another face appearing before him, the fear-stricken face of the man with the scourge. Is not he also a slave of slaves,—so much required of him under penalty not only of stripes, but loss of place, degradation, and ruin? And even Hippo? Who is Hippo? Jesus remembers to have seen him in his own garden, frolicking with his children, even on his hands and knees,—a man with a kind, benevolent face and gentle manners, a philosopher, who loves the company of Rabbis and who has been a generous friend of Israel.

And once, too, Hippo had been a little child, amused with a toy, pure, innocent, and affectionate, with a heart full of love for all that lived. What has changed Hippo? And Jesus calls to mind the Publican's spies, the bribes Hippo has to pay, here, there, and everywhere, the tributes, indemnities, tariffs, the strifes and enmities of competition, the frauds and deceptions of stewards and servants, the demands of his social standing, onerous, unappeasable. Who, indeed, should condemn Hippo!

It is all a maze of doubt and difficulty, and Jesus, lost in it, has let his graver's tool fall from his hand and has forgotten his work; he does not hear when a sweet voice not far away sings: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse. A spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits. Camphire with spikenard. Spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and

aloes, with all the chief spices. A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

There is the slight rustle of garments, the patter of feet, the tinkling of a silver bell, and at last a voice close at hand: "Oh, you slothful servant! What will the Master say if he finds you sitting so?"

Jesus starts, clutches at his graver's tool, and arises as if dazed and frightened. His mind, intensely occupied by so far different a theme, is ill prepared for encounter with such a vision as now stands before him. It is the same young girl with her gazelle that we saw with Jesus on the mountain, the same upon whom every eye was riveted in the dance at Haramie, but more beautiful, even, than then.

The bud has opened into the perfect flower,—and, as so rarely happens with the human flower, without her knowing it. She is the same impulsive, innocent, wild thing that we saw on the mountain of Galilee, with the contour of a young Venus and the stature and pose of Juno. Her head is without covering except for the broad circlet of gold and silver coins, which is her only ornament, and the great mass of her raven hair, confined only by a fillet of gold, hangs carelessly in wavy masses below her girdle. The light drapery common in the homes of all eastern peoples is worn with all the easy and unconscious grace of a young bird with its first plumage. Then there are the bare brown arms and shoulders, the bare feet shod only with sandals, the laughing mouth with its rows of pearls, and the flashing black eyes shaded by brows and lashes that need no penciling.

As Jesus' eyes fall upon this vision, his face, before so pale and bloodless, flushes crimson, and his eyes drop and turn away.

"Yes, yes. I should be working," said Jesus, catching up a cedar post that he had previously been carving, "but I was thinking about — Why, what was I thinking about!

Oh, I remember,—about a woman who was whipped over there.” And Jesus began cutting awkwardly at the grape cluster he was carving, while the gazelle nibbled at some rose buds, and the young girl, looking over his shoulder, drew close and curiously scrutinized the work Jesus was doing.

“Why! you’re just spoiling it all!” cries the girl playfully. “See how you have cut the stems from those lovely leaves.”

“Yes, yes, I have no skill to-day; or else it’s because you are looking at me: I can’t do anything with folks looking at me.”

“Oh, you queer boy! When it was only the other day you said I appreciated your work more than anybody else!”

“Yes, but that was finished work; I can’t work with you looking at me.”

“Well, then I’ll go. Come, Tirza,” she added, speaking to the gazelle, “he doesn’t want us here, though I must not forget my errand. The Rabbi Sadduc sent me to tell you to come up to the house when you have finished that one post. So now don’t think I came just to see *you*,” she concluded, laughing.

And dancing away with the gazelle, the girl began her retreat towards the house. Then Jesus hesitatingly called to her: “Just a minute; please come back a minute. I want to say just a word to you.”

“There now, hear that! Only a moment ago you were sending us away, and now you want us back again,” and the girl laughed banteringly. “Oh, what a fickle, changeable boy you are! No, you must come to us now,” and the girl began plucking some oleander blossoms and decking herself and the gazelle with them.

Jesus, went towards the girl, shyly and awkwardly and blushing painfully. “I wanted to know if anything more has been said about your going to Tiberias,” said

Jesus at length, regaining his composure and looking steadily at Mary.

It was the young girl's turn to blush and lower her eyes. But after a pause she answered a little petulantly: "There hasn't been a great deal said, but they want me, and Master Simon says I can go, and my mother says I can go; but Father says not, and I'm afraid to go, though they say it is very nice there, and they are making it one of the grandest cities in the world. And Honorius, they say, is a lovely man, if he is a Roman and a Publican, and he offers splendid pay and says he will have me taught everything that the Greeks and Romans know, and — and —" The girl paused, hesitating and blushing, and with infantine unconsciousness thrust out her tongue and made a little grimace. She was thinking of the many other promises of Honorius,—to make her a fine lady, and all his flattering words; but somehow she could not tell Jesus about them.

But Jesus marked her embarrassment, and pressed her further. "And what, what else was there?" he urged. "Probably he said you would become the wife of some Roman nabob, and perhaps even his own: wasn't that it?"

"I won't tell you anything if you talk that way to me," answered the girl, petulantly. "But I don't care, for Mother says that some of the greatest men in Rome have Hebrew wives, and we know that Joanna, the wife of King Herod's Roman steward Chusa, is a Jewess of Magdala. Mother says she used to know her well."

"O Mary! Mary! Mary!" Jesus' manner is stern and reproachful, but there is in his voice a tone of anguish, almost of despair.

The girl is becoming more and more troubled in looks and manner; her eyes are no more lifted to meet Jesus', and she is pulling in pieces the flowers she holds in her hands. The gazelle, approaching from behind, nibbles and pulls at the fastenings of her garment, and she turns and strikes it

angrily. The gazelle, terrified by such an unusual salutation, springs away in affright, and then turns and looks at its young mistress with such grieved and tender eyes that she calls it to her, and, putting her arms about its neck, begs its forgiveness with loving words and kisses.

Jesus looked on with wistful, devouring eyes. Mary continued to fondle the gazelle, and Jesus at length continued. "You told me not long ago that you didn't want to go to Tiberias, and that the thought of it was hateful to you; but now I'm afraid! I'm afraid!" Mary did not answer, and Jesus went on: "To say nothing of going to service with a heathen and a Roman Publican, which no right minded daughter of Abraham would ever willingly do, Tiberias is, as you well know, a place polluted and unclean. Antipas is building a great amphitheater there and adorning it with heathen ornaments of graven images and statues of men and beasts; and even his great synagogue is on ground where dead men's bones were dug up, and the whole place is an offense in the sight of God. Now I want you to promise me, and make a solemn vow, now and here, that you will not go to Tiberias."

The girl glanced up for an instant, but meeting now the steadfast gaze of Jesus she lowered her eyes again, and after a pause answered timidly: "I don't know what right you have to demand such a promise of me."

"The right of a man to save a woman from infamy," Jesus burst out passionately. "If your father and Master Simon are too weak and servile to do it, *I* must do it. You must promise me, Mary, I cannot take no for an answer, nor permit any kind of evasion. You must not go to Tiberias. Now stop playing with that animal, hold up your right hand, and repeat after me."

The girl pushed the gazelle gently away, raised her right hand, and without looking up repeated after Jesus, "In the presence of the one living and true God": "In the presence of the one living and true God;" "I promise": "I

promise"; "Not to go to Tiberias": "Not to go to Tiberias;" "For any purpose whatever": "For any purpose whatever;" "So help me God, and keep me steadfast": "So help me God, and keep me steadfast."

"Is that all?" asked the girl at length, looking up demurely.

"That is all now, and may God give you peace."

The girl, heedless of the gazelle's wild antics to attract her attention, moved away with slow steps and downcast eyes. Jesus returned to his work with an air and manner greatly changed. No listless abstraction now, no false strokes, but swift, sure, and strong; the chips fly, and the work, beautiful and true, grows under his hand like magic.

VIII

THE HILL-TOP

"All these, on the heights under which they nestled, were everyday sights of Jesus, from the round summit behind His own highland Nazareth."—GEIKE.

The building of the city of Tiberias by Antipas is one of those strange freaks of unbridled power of which the ancient world affords so many examples. Abandoning Sephoris, a city splendidly and healthily situated and provided at immense labor and cost with every luxury, facility, and defense, he removed his seat of government to a hot and malarious district where he built a new city for his capital. By the lavish use of money and unlimited power the city grew in a few years from a waste swamp to a metropolis of vast wealth and magnificence, and was accounted second only to Caesarea among the cities of Palestine.

As previously related, no strict Jew could be induced either to take up an abode there or to assist in any way in its construction. Roman architects and "heathen" laborers and artisans had been employed almost exclusively. Many thousands of workmen had been engaged in the work, which had progressed with marvelous rapidity, but not fast enough to satisfy the haste of Antipas. Accordingly the decree had gone forth that skilled workmen from all over Galilee and Perea should be forced to labor a certain time at the new capital. Jesus was one of those so selected. There was no release except by the payment of a large sum of money, which Jesus was wholly unable to procure; and the penalty of refusal was chains and the dungeon.

The conditions in the Nazareth home at this time made the requirement peculiarly trying. Jesus' mother, no

longer young, was suffering from overwork and anxiety. Doris, the invalid sister, still required constant care and assistance, and Jude being still away, the burden rested almost wholly upon Jesus. His daily toil alone stood between his mother and sister and utter destitution. As much as possible he did piece work at home, and while so doing the home life was beautiful and satisfying. On fine mornings Jesus often carried his sister out of doors and laid her on a rude couch where she could see him at his work; sometimes at evening he carried her to the top of the hill behind the town and placed her in the shade of the great olive tree that crowned the height. Often the mother went with them to this resort to enjoy with her children the fresh breeze and the inspiring scene. With her spindle and distaff she could still be busy while sitting with them under the tree, and at the same time teach them from objects in view the story of Israel's struggles and triumphs.

The Land of Promise was here spread out before them in a large measure. Thirty miles southward, hidden by the Samaritan hills, whose tops are visible, lies Shechem, where Abraham sojourned and pastured his flocks nearly two thousand years before. Joseph's grave is there, and Ebal and Gerizim; nearer still lie the mountains of Gilboa, where Saul and the loved Jonathan fell before the hated Philistine. Aphek is in plain view, where the mighty host of Benhadad was smitten before Israel; westward, and almost at their feet, is the valley of Kishon, where Deborah and Barak won their immortal renown,—and Carmel's mighty head land, green against the sapphire sea, where Elijah called down the rain from Heaven and slew the priests of Baal. The pious Israelites of Jesus' time lived much in the past, and upon its glorious record fed their hopes of the future. They believed implicitly in all that the Law and the Prophets taught of God's special love and promises to them, and with sublime patience awaited the sure deliverance.

Jesus with his mother and sister were talking of these things, the evening before Jesus' final departure for Tiberias. They had gone to the hill-top to take a farewell look at the scene so loved, and they lingered there till after dark. Now that the sun is setting, we can see in clear outline the billowy hills that rise northwards, wave over wave, to far off Lebanon. The white-washed walls of dwellings in a hundred towns and villages on their sides shine clearly through the pure air, and over all, sixty miles away, towers the snowy cap of Hermon, white and pure against the purple sky.

Southwards again, and far beneath them on the plain below, the sun's last rays bring out in full relief the creeping caravan that stretches eastward out of sight. It is the time for the evening prayer; and the sound of the trumpet from the Nazareth Synagogue floats up mellow and clear to the watchers on the hill. The mother lays aside her spindle and distaff, and she and her children bow themselves in prayer, uttering the same words that every Jew is repeating throughout the world. "Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one God."

When the prayer is ended, the shadows of evening are falling on valley and plain, the winding caravan can no longer be seen, but the snow-crown of Hermon still glitters with the sun's last rays, while the moon, rising over the far eastern mountains, silvers the hill-tops and shines upon the white-walled cottages of Cana, of Nain, and of Nazareth.

Jesus and his mother and sister still lingered, gazing silently upon the familiar scene and each busy with his own thoughts. At length the mother took up her spindle and distaff, but Jesus interposed and took them out of her hands. "No, Mother! Please don't work any more to-day. Maybe it is the last time we shall be together; so let us talk."

"Alas, my son, it is like the people of Babylon demand-

ing of our captive forefathers a song, when they could only hang their harps on the willows and weep. If we could only keep our home, the home of your forefathers for hundreds of years, and know that *sometime* you would come back to us here, we could work on, and endure; but Shunam will invent some new tax as soon as you are gone and sell us out of house and home."

There was silence for some moments, in which the mother unconsciously and from sheer habit resumed her spinning. Jesus, standing with folded arms, and face towards Carmel, which still loomed dark in the glowing west, was too absorbed in his own thoughts to notice; and after a time he began speaking again. "Yes, I have thought of it before; it may so happen. James has all he can do to support his own family, and Jude,—poor brother! of course we can expect nothing of him. Indeed, I am not sure but that we should be helping *him* rather, and, forsaking all, cast in our own lot with him. It is a time of trial for all. Those days spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, when the Archangel Michael shall stand up and trouble shall come upon Israel such as never was before, are no doubt at hand. The Rabbi Sadduc says that the Messiah is here now, and Jude believes that Jacobus is He. We must beware lest we fight against God. Cousin Simon has already gone to join Jacobus, and, Mother, do you know there are hundreds of young men here in Nazareth and in Cana and Capernaum who secretly belong to the Zealots? I am urged by many to forsake all, and go now to join Jacobus in Perea rather than go to the unclean service of Herod at Tiberias. If Father were alive to-day, what would he say? What do you say?"

It was an awful moment. The mother dropped her spindle in her lap but did not answer. Suddenly a night-ingle in the olive tree overhead began pouring forth its sad, plaintive song; and from the fountain on the hillside

beneath them a late water carrier, in high tenor, like a cry, started up the well-known psalm: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." The mother bowed her face in her hands while sobs shook her frame, and Doris, too, was weeping silently. Jesus came and kneeled by his mother's side, and she threw her arms about his neck and wept, crying, "O my son, my son, may the God of Sabaoth be with thee, to guard and guide as He did our Father Jacob of old." For some time the mother wept in silence on the breast of her son, and then, with an effort composing and straightening herself, she went on: "It is as you say: we must beware lest we fight against God; better far were it that a mill-stone were hanged about our necks and we were drowned in the depths of the sea. That the Messiah is surely at hand, who will restore the Kingdom to Israel, we all believe, but who and where? You remember that Jacobus, when last here with Jude, distinctly denied being himself the Messiah, and your grandfather Joazer has often told you how a great many in Israel believed that Jacobus' father Judas and his grandfather Ezekias was the Messiah, and how thousands upon thousands of the noblest young men of Galilee were hewn in sunder, tortured, and nailed to crosses for following them. Your father, as you know, was heart and soul a Zealot for the Law, as much as Jacobus, and he loved Jacobus and his brothers as his own soul; but he always opposed their methods, for he said we must wait patiently for the coming of the True Messiah, which, he said, would be as plain and unmistakable as the rising of the sun in a clear sky, whose light would shine to the ends of the earth."

IX

THE MAN.

“But was in all points tempted like as we are.”

It is a year later, and Jesus is again with his mother and sister at Nazareth. Brother Jude is also at home, but not now present with the family. He has but lately returned from a long sojourn with Jacobus in Perea and has signified his resolution to stay at home for a time and help; but he has remained for the most part sullen, moody, and silent, seeking companionship with fellow Zealots rather than with his mother and sister.

It is evening, and Mary and Doris are seated with Jesus beneath the great fig tree that has stood for centuries in the little garden back of the house. The tears and embraces of the joyful meeting are past, and the reunited family are telling one another the story of their year's experiences. Doris, who has recovered her health sufficiently to be of some help, is plying the spindle and distaff, while the mother is setting out the evening meal. There is no kid or fatted calf, but all the carefully hoarded treasures of her larder Mary sets forth for the returned loved one; yet when all is brought out, it is still a very simple meal,—barley bread and some dried fish, the latter sent long ago as a present by Father Joazer, a jar of figs from the tree over their heads, onions and cucumbers from the garden, and the last of some precious conserve of pomegranate, put up in the happier times of long ago.

When all was ready, Jesus, as was customary, asked a blessing on the food; but to the pain and astonishment of his mother, instead of the set form used by all Jews time out of mind he said simply, “We thank Thee, our Father, for this meeting together again, and for this food. Fill

our hearts with love and joy and gratitude to thee for these great blessings, and let them give us strength and courage to do the work which is ours to do. Amen."

When Jesus opened his eyes his first glance fell instinctively upon his mother. There was a look of anguish on her gentle face, and a tear was silently coursing down her cheek. "Forgive me, Mother," he said, gently, "I won't do so any more, if it hurts you so; but somehow in my lonely solitude at Tiberias I got in a way of praying just as I felt; and many days I seemed to get nearer to God by so doing than when I used only the formal prayer. But if you would rather I use the prayers you have always heard, I will use them."

The mother brushed the tears from her cheeks and tried to smile upon Jesus, but there was still a shadow of pain and doubt in her expressive face. "Perhaps it is foolish in me," she said, "but somehow it seemed to me that by living among the Heathen so long at Tiberias you had adopted some of their ways, and, I am sure, it is safer to stand by the customs of our Fathers. O my son! my son! Remember that Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, and holy priests, were stricken down of God before the altar when they offered *strange fire*, and it is because we, as a people, have forsaken His ways, the ways of the Fathers, that we have fallen upon these evil times. Remember the words of the Prophet Isaiah, who says: 'Thou shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, *nor speaking thine own words!*' "

"I will remember all you say, Mother," answered Jesus, "but don't think I am turning heathen. What I have seen in Tiberias has turned me against all Heathendom more than ever." Doris here interposed by inquiring about Tiberias and asked Jesus to tell them all about what he had seen and heard there and what he had had to do. "Oh, the less said about that the better," Jesus replied. "I want to banish it all from my mind, and if possible,

let it be a blank in my life. I had rather talk about how you have got along here! How did you manage to pay the taxes, or was Shunam a little merciful for once?" The women exchanged questioning glances, showing some embarrassment, but did not answer. "Come, I want to know," continued Jesus. "Doris, how was it? Ah! I have it now! You had to sell Mother's head-dress of coins: else Doris would surely have it on to-day; and Father's Teraphim,—is that gone, too? Alas, alas! And nothing left but the bare walls." And Jesus knew that there was missing many an ancient heirloom that had been handed down from father to son through many generations.

There were tears again in the eyes of the women, and the mother at length said: "Yes, we have had to suffer some privations, and to part with things we would wish to keep, but the little home is still ours. Doris is improved in health, and you are restored to us. We have much to be thankful for: blessed be God."

Jesus inquired who had got the Teraphim and head-dress, and if they could be redeemed. He was told that Shunam had taken all for taxes; and the mother repeated the old story of the antiquity of the precious things, and how they came from Babylon, and how she had refused to let the Teraphim go until Shunam had promised to hold it a year for redemption. Jesus had heard the story of the Teraphim since his earliest recollection, and how it had saved his grandfather from a cruel death in the days of the elder Herod; and he resolved to redeem it as soon as possible.

Meantime the mother had brought forth a small bottle of wine and placed it by Jesus' plate. "It is some of the famous vintage of Engedi," she said, "sent up by Cousin Elizabeth. It will do you good, I am sure."

"Now, Mother, do you really think that I need wine or strong drink?" And the young man, the image of health

and strength, looked smilingly upon his mother, and added: "No, it is you and Doris who need wine. It is for you two that Cousin Elizabeth sent it, not for me by any means. Her son John never tasted wine in his life; and he is strong as an ox, and supports his aged parents in comfort by the labor of his hands." But the mother and daughter were silent, while tears coursed down the mother's cheeks. "What is it?" asked Jesus in alarm. "Has anything happened to John?"

"Alas, we forgot to tell thee. Zacharias and Elizabeth are both dead, and John has gone,—no one knows where. Some say to join Jacobus in Perea, and some that he has gone to be a hermit with the Essenes in the wilderness of Ziph."

At that moment a footstep was heard and a man of tall stature approached and saluted them: "May the peace of God be with you all." All arose and saluted, and Jesus and the newcomer embraced each other affectionately. It was the Rabbi Sadduc, and when they were seated he called out a more detailed account from Jesus of his experience at Tiberias,—how he had been employed mostly on the palace and grounds of Honorius, and descriptions of the luxury and magnificence of the new capital.

"And if you had remained there another day," said the Rabbi, "you might have seen our Mary of Magdala, for she is now there with Honorius, I suppose."

"What! Mary of Magdala with Honorius?" exclaimed Jesus. It had grown too dark to see the expression of Jesus' face, but the tone of his voice startled the good Rabbi and the women. The Rabbi paused in some embarrassment, and Jesus broke out again: "Tell me at once! What is it you mean?"

"Pardon me, my son!" answered the Rabbi. "I had forgotten that you were so near a friend to Mary; but calm yourself: it may not be so bad as it at first appears.

Great efforts are being made for her release. Zosimius, the Centurion at Capernaum, knew Mary and is making a stir to get her back. We all hope it may be done."

"Then Mary went not willingly?" asked Jesus.

"It seems not," answered the Rabbi, a little doubtfully. "Simon, her master, says that she went willingly, but her father says not, and there are many circumstances that indicate force and even cruelty. She was taken away suddenly in the night, and a maid servant of Simon's tells me that she heard Mary crying and pleading piteously for her liberty. But Honorius is rich and a friend of Antipas, and may do what he likes. There is no law in Palestine for a rich Roman."

Mary and Doris were eager to know more of the details of the abduction, and the Rabbi told them how Honorius had been a frequent visitor at Hippo's in Capernaum, and seeing Mary often and admiring her greatly had long sought to draw her away to his new residence in Tiberias, and how he had employed every art and resource, bestowing many flatteries and many valuable presents on Mary and her mother, and promising to advance her father to a lucrative office in his household at Tiberias. He had won over the mother and Simon her master, and many believed that the girl herself had a secret leaning towards what appeared so tempting a prize.

"I have talked with her often on the subject," continued the Rabbi, "and warned her in the most solemn manner not to show any signs of yielding; and in the last talk I had with her, only a few days ago, she told me that she had promised someone — she wouldn't say whom — that she would never go to Tiberias, and she said she never would. I am sure that she was perfectly sincere in this, and though she may have been tempted, which for a poor girl in her situation was natural and in fact inevitable, plied as she was with promises and flatteries of the most alluring nature, I feel certain that she never yielded wholly

nor went willingly to Tiberias. Mary of Magdala, we must remember, comes of the best blood in Israel: her father has a clear record of descent from the ancient judge Deborah. Let us be sure she will not disgrace her name or lineage."

While the Rabbi was yet speaking there was the sound of a deep, hollow growl just beyond the wall that inclosed the garden, and the next instant one of those homeless, wandering dogs that inhabit all eastern cities set up a loud, wolfish howl that made the group in the garden shudder as from a vague, undefined fear. Doris, trembling, clutched at the arm of Jesus and shrank away as from the stroke of a lash. Jesus alone seemed not to hear, and in a voice betokening intense but subdued excitement took up the conversation as if nothing had happened.

"Father Sadduc," he said, "you have ever been the friend of our family and now I am going to ask of you a great favor. You have no family of your own and you can do what I ask without great sacrifice. I am going away, to be gone I know not how long. Brother Jude is here now and I need not ask him to take good care of our mother and sister, for I know he will surely do for them all that is in his power; but so many things happen, and if any thing *should* happen to Jude, so he could not do all that should be done for Mother and Doris, I want to ask you to have them in mind and not let them suffer. You know that if I live to return you will be repaid four-fold." Jesus hesitated, but finally went on: "Perhaps I am too fearful, and Jude's being here should surely be enough; and perhaps in any case I am asking too much?"

It had grown too dark for them longer to see one another's faces, and the silence that followed was painful in the extreme. "It would be a pleasure to me, my son," answered the Rabbi at length, "to do you and yours such a kindness in a proper case; but, as you say, Jude is here, and why indeed should you go away? You do not say

where you are going, and I fear that your concern for Mary of Magdala is leading you into dangerous and impractical schemes. I beg of you to make no rash attempts to release her and wait at least until the measures already taken shall be tried."

"Will the eagle give back his prey for the cries of the women and children? Will the wolf return the lamb he has dragged to his den for soft words and bowing in the dust before him? I will do nothing rash: but I feel that I must go. As God is my judge, I cannot do otherwise. Mother, you will not say me nay, and Doris?"

The girl for answer put her arms around Jesus' neck and kissed him without speaking; the mother also kissed him tenderly, not daring to trust her voice. Jesus arose, and signified his determination to go at once.

"What! Not stay with us one night?" cried his mother, weeping. "Oh, how can I let you go! My son! My son!"

"It is impossible for me to rest, Mother, till I have done something, till at least I *know* more."

There were more tender leave takings, and the good Rabbi embraced Jesus and gave him his blessing: "May the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob be with thee and guard and help thee, as He did them, and may he send fear and confusion into the hearts of the heathen, our enemies."

"In His fear do I walk all the day long," was Jesus' answer. Then he moved swiftly away, sprang over the wall, and was gone.

X

TIBERIAS

"The city was peopled chiefly by adventurers, and adorned with an Amphitheater, of which the ruins can still be traced."—EDERSHEIM.

From the days of Herod the Great the policy of government in Palestine had been to break down Jewish prejudice against foreign influence and to win away the people to the corrupting manners and religion of their Roman Masters. With two classes of Jews this effort had been in some measure successful. The very rich and the very poor, in this instance as in all others, had been the first to yield to corrupting influences. The degeneracy, beginning with the High Priestly families of Jerusalem and their hosts of servile retainers, had spread more slowly in Galilee and was resisted with fanatical zeal by the sturdy middle-class yeomen of field and workshop. Renegade Jews of the lowest class, and in very considerable numbers, were holding lucrative positions in the employment of opulent Romans and Greeks, yielding acquiescence to the heathen practices of their lords and masters and apparently forgetful of Moses and the Law. But even these, a few years later, in the final war that extinguished the Jewish Nation, were found almost to a man sword in hand and ready to die for the Law and liberty.

It was no doubt in pursuance of this policy that Antipas had built Tiberias, and together with a magnificent synagogue had erected there temples to Venus and Dionysius, a temple to the Emperor for whom the city was named, and also an immense amphitheater for the celebration of heathen games. The parks, gardens, and all public places were adorned with images and statues offensive to Jewish eyes as forbidden by the second command in the Deca-

logue. When Jesus was dismissed from his servitude at Tiberias, the city was practically finished and as soon as might be the celebration of the event was begun.

A sufficient number of renegade priests were found to officiate in the synagogue and that, with the temples, was opened with magnificent and imposing ceremonies; and the great amphitheater received its baptism of blood in Roman games and gladiatorial combats. At night there were torch and Greek-fire displays from superbly-decked galleys on the lake, followed by the revelries of the banquet in the palaces of Antipas and his friends. Great multitudes had attended upon these festivities, and Antipas and his friends had accepted the omen with undisguised exultation.

There had, however, been comparatively few of the children of Abraham in attendance and the multitude that filled the amphitheater to overflowing was made up chiefly of Greeks from the free cities of Decapolis, and Canaanites and Syrians, great numbers of whom inhabited the cities of Palestine, even Nazareth and Capernaum.

It is the night following upon the last day of these festivities, and Antipas and his friends are assembled as the guests of Honorius. Second only to Antipas' own, the palace and grounds of Honorius are of great extent and magnificence, and no expense has been spared to make the occasion one long to be remembered even by these hardened revelers of a sensual and decadent age. The guests were of many nations and tongues; for Palestine had come to be a very polyglot of nations, and the educated class had to know not only the vernacular Aramaic but also the language of their Roman masters and governors, and Greek, the language of commerce, of polite learning, and of the Court. To this the pious Jew must add Hebrew, the language of the Law and of the Sacred Oracles. And so to this feast of Honorius were gathered Roman Knights, and Greek, Egyptian, Phœnician, and Syrian nobles, philosophers, savants, and adventurers; rich Sad-

ducees also,—Hebrews of the purest blood: Sanballat was there, and Rabbi Boethus. Simon and Hippo of Capernaum, whom, we know, were invited and had been present during the ceremonies of the day, excused themselves from the night banquet on the plea of ill health; so also with Aretas, the Arabian king, and father-in-law of Antipas. He could endure the hollow mockeries of religious ceremonies in the dedication of temples,—but the wily and abstemious Ishmaelite found a convenient headache a welcome release from excesses to which he was neither accustomed nor disposed.

There was no lack of women at the feast, some of them held as wives but mostly mistresses and divorced. Galla the Moabitess, whom we saw in the train of Sanballat, is here with the dark-browed Glaphyra, whose mother, another Glaphyra, had borne her to Juba the Libyan King, and whose beauty had driven Archelaus to crime. She has a history, as does also Lamia, the beautiful Greek, who recites poetry and talks of Plato and Aristophanes. Macro, the future successor of Sejanus, is here, and others who like him have hobnobbed with Tiberias himself in those unspeakably obscene orgies for which the great Emperor became famous. For the entertainment of these Honorius has not scrupled to borrow of his neighbors, and Antipas has contributed a large number of the attendants and skilled performers. Of these last there are dancers of both sexes, and from distant countries jugglers, mimes, and musicians of all kinds, vocal and instrumental, acrobats, wrestlers, and men skilled in sword play. Nothing is lacking.

The feast is intended to be a copy on a smaller scale of those Roman banquets introduced by Cataline, refined and embellished by Cleopatra and her paramours, and brought to utmost perfection a generation later by Caligula and Nero. Antipas, while at Rome enjoying the favor of Augustus, had been a frequent partaker of these ban-

quets and, like Honorius, was looked upon as a connoisseur in the noble art of banqueting. The triclinium or banqueting hall is a vast room, with high arched roof and twice as long as wide. On three sides and against the wall is ranged a continuous low couch or divan, with heaps of cushions upholstered with real damask from Damascus and with Tyrian trimmings of blue and gold. Before and against these couches are the tables, spread with the feast and adorned with a costly service of silver and gold and every device of luxury. The middle of the room has no other furnishing than statues of various gods and goddesses, done in marble, Corinthian brass, and terra cotta, with golden tripods for lamps and incense. This central space is for the attendant slaves and servants and, on occasion, for theatric shows and representations. The fourth side or end of the room is occupied by a dais or platform, with curtains and side lights, where most of the histrionic performances are given. The background and entrances of this stage are in deep shadow. On this background of darkness it was that the handwriting appeared to the terrified Belshazzar: "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.*" The sides of the hall are covered between the niches for statuary with paintings drawn from Greek and Roman legend,—as the Feast of the Lapithæ, the Marriage Feast of Peleus and Thetis, the Rape of the Sabine Women, and one even from Jewish sacred history, the Rape of the Daughters of Shiloh by the Benjamites; there are feasting scenes, and scenes of wild Bacchanalian revelry.

It is past midnight, but as the entertainment is expected to outlast the night the courses are served at long intervals, giving ample time for conversation, witticisms, and salacious stories. Much of the spectacular entertainment has already passed. The wrestlers, the acrobats, the Indian and Egyptian jugglers, and the nautch dancers have shown their skill. And now, to crown the entertainment, the Master of Ceremonies announces a representation of

the death of Pentheus in a Bacchic dance, to end in a brief presentation of Prometheus Bound. All the flambeaux of cinnamon, cedar, and balsam and the lamps have gone out; but flitting here and there like fire flies through the great hall are naked children, drugged to keep them awake and lively, each with bow and arrows and a small torch of burning nard, whose odors, like Lethean draughts, stifle all sense of guilt or shame. The light is dim, and the stage at the end of the hall is but faintly illumined by concealed side lights that at moments blaze out with lurid glare and again wane and go out.

Twelve Syrian girls, bearing flutes, cymbals, and thyrses, and naked but for the abundant encircling bands and wreaths of vine and ivy, now come upon the stage and begin their mystic dance. At first slowly circling and winding, they artfully conceal their forms by the incessant movement of wreaths and ivy-bound thyrses. At the same time, as if from overhead and far away, a wild, weird, amorous song of Sappho's fills and thrills the air like a harp. This, with the accompaniment of cymbals, flutes, and pan-pipes, the dancers answer with a like song from Anacreon. In the midst of this Pentheus appears at the back of the stage, and with frowning brow and threatening gestures seems to forbid the rite and orders them away. At once the dance, which has been thus far only weird and fascinating, becomes a mad orgie of writhing, twisting bodies and ear-piercing sounds. Amid the din of clashing cymbals, the roar of flutes and pan-pipes, the wail and shriek of witch-like voices fill the trembling air like a breath from the pit of Tophet. The lights all this time are turned low, till the strained eye sees little but what the imagination, tortured to delirium, conjures from the whirling mass. Then a flood of lurid light flashes an instant across the stage, revealing forms, features, limbs, and locks of unbound hair; and now, with one accord, throwing aside thyrses, cymbals, and flutes, with wild discordant

screams they cast themselves like harpies on the intruding man, and while the lights sink low and go entirely out they tear him limb from limb.

Meanwhile the banqueters, filled with wine, have abandoned all restraint: women stripped naked to the waist recline upon the breasts of men, whose only garment is a scarlet, sleeveless shirt, euphemistically called a tunic; and wine, wine, wine flows like a flood.

After a time a sweet female voice, sounding as if from above and far away, sings:

“Not to unwilling hearers hast thou uttered, Prometheus,
thy request,
And now with nimble feet, abandoning
My swiftly rushing car,
And the pure ether, path of birds of Heaven,
I will draw near this rough and rocky land,
For much do I desire
To hear the tale, full measure of thy woe.”

The singing is distant and indistinct at first, but grows each instant nearer and clearer, while at the same time a faint light, like that of dawning day, begins to appear again upon the stage, and soon the giant form of Prometheus, bound to the rock, is fully seen, with the twelve Syrian girls as Ocean Nymphs grouped about him.

Earlier in the evening there had been some rather sharp passages of wit between Macro and the Jewish guests, and now Macro, addressing Honorius, returned again to the encounter. “You should have something more to the taste of our Hebrew friends, Honorius, Sanballat here, and the Rabbi Boethus. Why couldn’t you have given us a representation of the whale swallowing Jonah, or the passage of the Red Sea, or the loves of David and Solomon, — of Solomon in his harem, for instance; how is that, Sanballat? When we come up to Damascus, to return this visit, we shall expect something spicy in that line. Your sacred books, I believe are full of them.”

“Yes,” answered Sanballat, “our legends of gods and

heroes are very similar to those of all other nations. There has to be something marvelous and sensuous to hold the attention of the mass of the people, such people as you and Eugenius; but philosophers and statesmen care nothing about them one way or another."

"Do you hear that, Antipas?" cried Macro, "hear this that Sanballat says about you statesmen?"

But the statesman Antipas was just then engaged in maudlin frolic, trying to force the more cautious and abstemious Galla to drink the portion of wine that had for some time stood untouched before her. Of course the wine got spilled where it should not; and Antipas, in too familiarly offering to wipe it off, got a sharp slap on the ear from the hand of Galla. Macro was himself half drunk, and mumbled something about statesmen and even kings being subject to human weaknesses, and then, addressing himself again to Sanballat, continued.

"I don't know so much about the philosophers you speak of, but I know that kings,—and I suppose that kings are also statesmen,—and warriors generally believe in the gods and prodigies enough, too. Even Julius Cæsar, though he appeared to believe in no god at all and denied any kind of life for men after death, is said to have always worn a charm in which he had absolute faith, and he believed in a nation of Amazons too. Then with my own eyes I have seen Tiberias crawling on his hands and knees before the image of Isis, and warrior as he is he is scared to death if he sees three crows on a dead branch."

"Well, very likely some demon may have been subject to Cæsar's charm, and Tiberias may get a kind of help from Egyptian Isis, but they are all a poor lot, and not to be depended on. It stands to reason that there is but one supreme God."

"True enough," answered Macro, "that's what we all believe: the only question is, who *is* that Supreme God. Our friend Nicias over there would say, the One Supreme

is Zeus ; we Romans call our Great One, Jupiter, though to speak the truth, we have long since ceased to believe in him. The Persians call their chief god Ahuro Mazdao, and the Egyptians say that their god Osiris lords it over all the rest ; and you Jews, worse than all the others, pretend to say that your Jehovah, *alone*, is God, and all the rest are only demons and enemies of God, and you don't more than half believe it yourselves ; for you talk about angels and archangels, and cherubim and seraphim, and what are they but a lot of big and little gods, such as the Greeks and Romans have. We're all alike in this matter of belief and the whole thing is a big deception, originating in phallic doctrines far back of all historic records. Nobody of any sense now-a-days believes in gods at all ; such childish notions are, as you say, for the ignorant multitude, who, like little children, have to be kept in place by toys and birch-rods,— gods and demons."

Here the Rabbi Boethus took up the argument. "No doubt there is a great deal of humbug about all religions at present,— in fact, we see it everywhere, but there must be a root of truth somewhere, and we Jews believe that this root is revealed in our sacred writings, and nowhere else. Men, as you say, require toys and birch-rods to keep them from evil, and not only the poor and ignorant, but everybody,— you and I and the Emperor himself ; and so we have the promises and the threatenings, what you call the toys and the birch-rods."

"Bah!" broke in Macro, "and what do you care for them? You Jews all wear amulets and charms, like the Greeks and the Romans, and trust in them more than you do in any promises or threatenings. The mother of your race had her teraphim, and Joseph his divining cup, and Moses and Aaron their divining rods, and you to-day trust more to those ridiculous things you bind on your arms and foreheads, and those charms you nail to your door-posts, than to any thing else at all ; and the best and

wisest of you don't believe in any life after death more than Julius Cæsar did, or Cato, or Cataline, or any of us. Now isn't that so, Rabbi Boethus?"

"I'll answer your question by asking another," returned the Rabbi. "Now you, as Epicurean, profess entire disbelief in gods; or, as Epicurus himself puts it, 'if there are gods, they have nothing to do with men;' and you make light of our mezuzah and phylacteries. But please tell us about that great seal ring, with its Egyptian hieroglyph, that you wear on your third finger, and why you mutter an incantation over it every morning when you rise."

The bibulous condition of all the guests at this hour of the night could alone account for or excuse such free banter, and Antipas, whose interest it was to guard against any serious outbreak between Jews and Romans, now came to the rescue by calling upon Honorius for a new sensation.

"I say, Honorius," he cried, turning away from Galla for the moment, "are we not to see that new star, or full moon, or sun, or whatever you call her, that you have lately discovered and brought home to you from Magdala, — or was it at Capernaum you got her?"

"Yes, by Venus and Bacchus too," cried Macro, turning at once to Honorius, "they say that she is the most beautiful woman in Palestine and dances better even than Salome."

"Look out, Macro," cried Antipas, laughing, "I'll tell Salome of that when I see her at Jerusalem, and I'm going up there in a day or two."

Honorius appeared quite averse to the proposition of Antipas, and made all the excuses possible; but at last, yielding to the general clamor and the superior interest of Antipas, he gave the order for the unknown woman to appear and dance. A few moments later, and the chief Eunuch appeared and made his way to Honorius' elbow,

where he whispered the intelligence that the damsel sent for excused herself and declined to come. This Honorius announced to his guests, but they only clamored the louder, and all, including Honorius himself, being by this time very drunken, they were past listening to the voice of mercy or even of reason; and so Honorius sent again, and this time commanded the Eunuch to use whatever means might be necessary to compel the damsel to appear and dance.

After a time we hear a movement on the stage, and then the side lights begin slowly to reveal the figure of a woman standing there alone. Gradually the light increases till at last she stands forth in a glare of dazzling brilliancy that reveals every line and detail. Like the rest, our eyes are riveted upon the spot in cruel expectation! Our hearts have dismally forecast that it is She,— Mary of Magdala. But is it? The woman stands forth in the pitiless glare, with every line and fibre of form, feature, and drapery revealed distinct and clear. And still we hesitate. There is the same matchless form, the same superb beauty, eyes and hair the same, but changed all,—transfigured. It is no longer the gay, laughing girl, pleased with a flower, playing with her gazelle, but a full lived, beautiful woman newly awoke to monstrous, irrevocable wrong. It is the Hebrew Medea, if possible, a more terrible thing than the Grecian one. It was evident at first glance that Mary was not there to dance; not only her dress but her manner, bearing, and cast of countenance betokened far other entertainment than dancing. Her apparel was magnificent and stately, as of a very empress, and her attitude could not have been more proud and haughty had she been Zenobia or Semiramis. At first sight of her, a silence fell upon the company of gay revellers, as sudden and complete as if a very angel of God had appeared among them. Even the most drunken were for the moment sobered and awed; and the timid and superstitious Antipas, casting off Galla, and sitting erect, clutched at the table-

edge and stared with bulging eyes. For what indeed was this figure on the stage but a portent! Instead of a gay companion of their revelry, a nautch-dancer, a Thais or Delilah, was what appeared a Hebrew Sibyl,—a reminder of Judith and of Jael? For an instant Mary stood, fixing her audience with eyes that burned into their very souls. To the majesty of a queen she added what appeared the ineffable scorn, the contempt, the hate of a fallen angel.

“You have sent for me, Honorius,” she began, “as the Lords of the Philistines sent for the blind Samson in chains, to make sport for them at their feast. Such sport as he made for them would God I could make for thee and those who sit at meat with thee. O thou heathen monster! Thou scum of all villainy! And was it not enough that thou shouldst be a devil, but that thou shouldst also be a fool? What evil spirit was it that cheated thee to think that a daughter of Deborah would stoop to fawn upon thee, to share thy drunken revels, and be thy slave? Did Herod, the foul murderer, adulterer, and renegade, tempt thee; or was it *all* those sons of Belial, drunken, beastly whore-mongers and harlots that sit at meat with thee? Did they make thee believe that with a nod they could make a daughter of Israel to become even as a Syrian girl?”

Mary's voice, at the beginning low and sepulchral but distinct and audible to the remotest corner of the great hall, had risen as she proceeded till it became almost like the scream of a vulture, though still clear, and smooth without breaking. Her whole aspect,—face, form, and manner,—had grown demoniacal; her very stature seemed to shoot up to unnatural height; her great black eyes stood out and gleamed with hellish fire; her nostrils curled and quivered in haughty scorn; and to the timid Antipas, superstitious, alarmed, and drunk, they seemed to emit flame and smoke! So terrible was her aspect that the

fair Greek Lamia imaged in her the very Gorgons of old, with snaky hair and brazen claws, turning by her glance all things to stone.

At length, pointing at the trembling group a long, jewelled finger that seemed to have in it the menace of a poisoned dagger, she cried, "Cowards! Traitors! Beasts! May the curse of Almighty God follow and forever rest upon you! *God's Curse!* GOD'S CURSE! GOD'S CURSE!" she repeated, with voice rising in power and volume till to the cowering victims of her wrath it seemed to fill the world and reach to Heaven.

Then, drawing a long, gleaming dagger from her robe, she raised it on high and cried, "And may your enemies at the last smite you thus." But the ending designed by Mary was not permitted to transpire. As she raised the dagger the chief Eunuch of Honorius, who had been watching from an alcove in the background, rushed out and with the assistance of other servants, with struggle and wounds, Mary was overpowered and borne away.

The effect of all this upon the company of revellers was for the moment prodigious and overwhelming. The men were stunned and silent; the women wept and screamed. Poor Lamia, leaning on the breast of Macro, was sobbing like a child. "It was a Gorgon," she murmured. "How terrible! Do let us go away!"

"Gorgon or what," answered Macro, trembling, "by the head of Pallas, she is a queen, though. To somebody she might still be the maid Medusa; but to Honorius she is sure to be a Gorgon."

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It is the early morning, and we are in the temple square of Tiberias. How different from yesterday. The throngs of gay revellers that filled the square, the streets, the temples, and the public gardens are no more seen,—only here and there a solitary pedestrian, a slave urged forth by fear. The swans in the pool before the temple of Astarte

enjoy an unaccustomed solitude, and the water pouring from the breasts of the great statue of Astarte murmurs and echoes among the columns of the empty and silent portico of the temple, where yesternight crowds of wild devotees celebrated in darkness the obscene rites of the Syrian Queen.

Over against us, on the opposite side of the square, rise the bare, massive walls of the synagogue, and now, as the sun rises over the eastern mountains, the clear, mellow note of a trumpet announces that it is the moment of prayer to the one God for every child of Abraham throughout the world. A poor slave woman, who has just filled a large jar with water at the fountain, lets it down painfully from her shoulder and on the bare pavement, in the very shadow of the heathen goddess, bows her head and repeats, "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord. . . ."

On another side of the square, and fronting the east, the great temple dedicated to the Emperor Tiberius raises an imposing front. Here Antipas, in servile flattery, has lavished the life-blood of Israel. Here, where one of the vilest of mankind is worshipped as a god, the obsequious ruler of Israel has erected a temple whose magnificence makes the heart of every Jew who looks upon it burn with shame and indignation, knowing, as he does, that it is from the blood and toil of the people of God, who abominate it, that it was erected. Now, in the light of the rising sun, the gold and silver and precious stones of its front glance and gleam in many-colored splendor. In its broad portico we may see columns of delicate tinted yellow marble from far Numidia, porphyry and syenite from the quarries of Egypt, and white marbles of Pentelicus, with statues and votive offerings hateful to every Jew. But grandly beautiful as it all is, in its wealth and newness, and bathed in the splendor of morning, there is yet a sense of sadness and depression in looking upon it that cannot be overcome.

The effects of the revelries and debaucheries of the past few days and nights still lie upon the city, as well as upon its inhabitants, like an all-pervading presage of judgment and of doom. The streets are unswept; and vultures and unclean birds, amidst clouds of flies, gorge themselves on the marble pavements, unscared. The wreaths and festoons of flowers on the pillars and statues are withered and fallen, and the pavement is littered with the refuse of a careless multitude. At the temple of Bacchus, on the eastern side, among the columns and in dark corners of the temple-courts, loathsome creatures, men and women, are still sleeping off the effects of their debaucheries; and the pavement is strewn with broken thyrses, flutes, and pan-pipes, empty wine skins, and burned out torches. Farther along, in the arena of the great amphitheater, the uncaged tigers and hyenas are licking the blood from the pavement and feeding on the dead bodies of slain men.

And such is the beginning of Antipas' new capital, Tiberias. At this same hour, on the street that leads to the new palace of Honorius, may be seen the solitary figure of a man walking as if weary and spent. He turns in from the road to Capernaum, and as the gate to the grounds of Honorius is not yet open he sits down on a stone bench outside to wait. We do not recognize him at first; but on looking more closely we see that it is Jesus,—his whole appearance and demeanor so changed, and indicating grief, sadness, and weariness. He has scarcely eaten or slept for many days, and the effects of long wayfaring are very plain. He is dusty, disheveled, footsore, and blood is mixed with dust on his sandals.

Soon the gate is opened, and a swarm of slaves pour out. Many of them recognize Jesus and salute him with signs of pleasure and gladness. The gate-keeper is also a friend, and a Jew; with him Jesus exchanges a few hurried words and passes on inside.

As in Persia in the days of Esther and Mordecai, so in

Palestine and all the East there are Jews in the household of every ruler and every rich man,—often concealing their nationality and religion, and for the time ceasing to observe openly the law of Moses, but never for a moment forgetful of the promise made to Abraham, nor of the vengeance no less sure. In the service of Honorius were such Jews. Margaloth, the ruler of his household, was such a one. Jesus, while at work on the palace, had become acquainted not only with these Jews but with many others, Gentiles as well.

Jesus knew the whole plan and structure of Honorius' palace,—all its deep underground dungeons, all its labyrinth of winding ways and secret rooms and passages. So it was very easy for him to find Margaloth, and make known his errand. As Honorius and most of his guests had been carried away to bed by the servants in a state of beastly drunkenness only a short time before, there seemed to be no danger of interference from that source, and Jesus, as soon as he had washed and taken some light refreshment, was brought where he could see Mary alone. Mary had been told only that "a friend" wished to see her, but her heart told her who the friend was; and at first she refused to see Jesus. Mary's mother also opposed the meeting, but Margaloth insisted; and aided, perhaps, by the simple, child-like yearnings of her own heart, Mary at last consented and Jesus was admitted to her presence alone. It was a private apartment, made and furnished expressly for the purpose, and assigned to Mary by Honorius. It looked out upon a garden and fountains of bewildering beauty, and was furnished with every device of luxury that money could buy or ingenuity contrive.

Mary was dressed in simple home-garb, with the old coronet of coins, as Jesus had last seen her, and was standing in subdued light, with joined hands and downcast eyes,—the attitude of simple shame and grief. Jesus'

heart almost stopped beating as he looked upon her, and he paused a moment shocked and appalled; then recovering himself, he moved towards her again, as if to salute her, as a Jewish man may salute a woman friend.

Then the voice of Mary cried out in agonizing tones: "Don't touch me! Unclean, unclean!" It was a terrible moment. Jesus, covering his face with his hands, sank down upon a couch and groaned aloud: "O God of Israel, have pity, have mercy!" And great sobs wrung and convulsed the young man's frame, and the tears fell streaming through his hands. After a time, he ceased to weep, but he sat a long time silent and motionless, as if forgetful of where he was,—while Mary stood as if turned into stone.

When Jesus at last raised his head and looked up, his face was calm but terrible to look upon. Mary lifted her eyes timidly and involuntarily raised her hands and uttered a suppressed cry as she looked upon him. But Jesus did not notice, and with a stern, set face began to speak again: "Whatever has happened, or can happen, Mary, know this, that I can never be other than your friend: not the friend I had dreamed and hoped, but still your best friend; and as it appears your only true friend. You are not so much to blame, as others who should have known better. Your mother, Margaloth tells me, is the one who has betrayed you; she dreams of your being the wife of Honorius and of a grand estate in Antioch or Rome. In your heart of hearts, I know you cannot choose such a life: Better to be a servant or even a slave in a godly household than to live in sin as the mistress of the world. Fly with me, now and at once. With a boat on the lake I can before another dawn put you with Jacobus and his men in the fastnesses of Perea; and if need be, later, with King Aretas in the desert beyond Bashan, for at heart he is an enemy of Antipas and all that pertains to him. Come, make haste and let us go."

Tears were streaming down Mary's cheeks and falling unheeded upon her hands. After a time she moved away to a window that looked out upon the lake not far away, and the distant hills, Magdala, her childhood's home, with its white-washed walls and cottages fringed with palm and citron groves, shone pure and beautiful in the morning sun; and farther on lifted in azure blue the hills of Cana, where with Jesus long ago she sported with her Uncle Clopas' lambs and the gazelle.

"Oh, if my father were only here, he would tell me what to do; but now what should I do? What should I do? O God! What *shall* I do?" Jesus made no answer, and after a long silence Mary turned towards him and said, "No, I must not go with you. I can see now plainly how it would be. It would be only a sacrifice on your part, and all for me, who am unworthy. It would be only to drag you down: it couldn't raise me up. If I could only die,—without sin,—it would be so much better. And would it be sin, as things are? Would not the good God forgive? And *you* should be my executioner, and what more fit! These Romans boast that they had a Brutus once who killed his only son for a sin far less than mine. Be you my Brutus! Here, take this dagger and strike me dead!" And Mary, with her left hand baring her bosom, with the other thrust out the jeweled hilt of a dagger towards Jesus. "Take it! Oh, take it. Please, please do," she cried in an agony of pleading. "Surely it is best so; there is no other way."

The wild agony of the girl and the desperate nature of the situation had calmed Jesus completely, and fixing his eyes upon Mary he said in solemn, earnest tones: "Thou shalt not kill."

They stood looking at each other, and for the first and last time in life their eyes met in that commingling of souls that comes only to rare spirits, and to them but

once. Their souls leaped the gulf that separated them; but like that gulf which stretched from Dives to Abraham's bosom for their mortal parts it was impassable. Long they stood thus gazing into each other's eyes, till at length Mary suddenly raised the dagger with motion and intent to plunge it into her breast. Jesus sprang to arrest her hand but was not near enough to prevent a wound. The girl struggled desperately to finish her work, but uttered no cry: she knew what that would mean for Jesus, and with set teeth and closed lips submitted at last to the superior strength of Jesus and allowed herself to be disarmed without a word.

When Mary had ceased to struggle and sank down, Jesus again spoke. "You see, of course, that my life is in peril every moment I remain here now, but I shall not go till you have promised me that you will not attempt this again, but will live and strive. Our life is a gift of God, given us for noble uses, and we insult His goodness and His majesty when we thrust this, His greatest gift, back upon him as a thing despised. No matter how hard and painful the task that is assigned us, we must do it. Promise me that you will."

There was a step at the door, and Margaloth appeared with a troubled countenance. "I am sorry," he said, "but it is very dangerous for you to stay longer. Come at once." Jesus did not move,—only looked steadfastly at Mary, who, seizing his arm, cried out vehemently, "Oh, yes, do go, go! go! do go!"

"Not till you promise," answered Jesus, calmly.

"Oh, I do promise, I promise anything, if you only will go." It was the supreme moment. Again the eyes of Jesus and Mary met in infinite, vain longing, and the movings of Nature were strong. For an instant Jesus hesitated, and the shocked Margaloth almost put out a hand; but the wave passed, only lifting them to fields and

visions not to be reached again, and receding left a wide and dreary shore of barren sand. There was no word more spoken; but Mary saw, and lowered her eyes, and Jesus, turning silently away, went out with Margaloth.

XI

THE ROBBERS

"In its rough and almost inaccessible rocks are hidden spaces, from which a thousand men could assemble for a foray against the merchants of Damascus."—STRABO.

It is winter among the lava beds of Trachonitis, in the ancient kingdom of the giants. The mighty Og ruled here,—Og, whose bedstead of iron was thirteen and a half feet long. It is a wild and desolate land; but in this central portion where we now find ourselves, it seems more like a plateau than a mountain region.

There is no vegetation to be seen, and the bare, massive rock of black basalt is seamed and splintered into a thousand forms. Lifted thousands of feet above the lake of Galilee, its climate is far more rigorous; and the snow that fell last night is but just beginning to melt in the morning light. There is no living thing in sight but a vulture circling far overhead, and a gaunt jackal that seems to be following a fresh, broadly marked trail which comes in from the east. Doubtless this trail leads to the place we are seeking, and we will follow it. There are the footprints of sheep and donkeys and men, and, sad to say, of children too.

We see here and there the print of small, bare feet in the snow, and some larger ones with blotches of blood that look like women's. Suddenly the trail apparently ends, cut off by a yawning chasm where the solid rock is split, as we may well imagine, to the earth's center, for we can see no bottom. In its dark depths the sun never shines, and so narrow, a boy may cast a stone across it. Where the trail seems to end we find at last what appears to be a narrow path leading steeply down diagonally along the

face of the cliff. Its entrance is blocked with rough, and broken rocks, such as everywhere here abound, and except for the footprints in the snow no mark or vestige of any living thing would be discovered by the keenest eye. This glass-like basalt leaves no trail, but the snow, rare even in this high plateau, is a tell-tale intruder; and not only have we been able to trace this company in its path, but its enemies also, if they are up and doing before the clouds break and an hour's sun leaves the trail like the path of a ship in the sea, may now find them out.

What is that moving spot on the snow, far away towards Kenath? It cannot be a caravan, for the caravan road is farther away eastward,—and this comes swiftly on this way. At length, as we watch, the sun shines out for a moment and we catch the glint of armour and the fluttering banner of Rome. While we gaze a huge hand is laid upon our shoulder and we turn to meet the calm, stern eye of Jacobus. “Yes,” he says, “the snow has betrayed us and we must fight, and it is well: we are ready. Come, let us go.” And springing nimbly over the rocks, he leads the way down along the face of the cliff by a path so rough and narrow that one only can pass. A misstep, and neither the vultures nor the jackals would find what remains of us. Soon we are at the mouth of a cave, and turning in are at once in the midst of the band of “robbers.” How far “robbers” we shall know presently.

The three brothers of Jacobus are here, and Boaz and Jehu and Simon of Clopas, and one they call Barabbas, the son of a noted Rabbi of Jerusalem, and many others, fifty or more strong men armed and in armor, and — No? Can it be? Yes! Far back, where some captive women and children are huddled in abject, sickening misery, a flaming torch lights up a face so noble, pure, and grand it can belong to but one — Jesus of Nazareth.

It is he, unarmed and dressed in the same simple garb he wore at Nazareth. He is binding up wounds and speaking

gentle words to those helpless ones, heathen though they are, who have lost their all. No men are among the captives. The bodies of the men lie yet unburied amid smoking ruins. Eliminating Jesus, the picture may stand as a type of what this land has ever been, and is. It was the Sabeans inhabiting these rocks and caves who fell upon the oxen and asses of Job and killed his servants with the edge of the sword. Abram pursued the robber kings to "Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus." Old Og and Sihon robbed and murdered the peaceful denizens of the plain and hid their plunder in this very cave.

The modern traveler finds the conditions unchanged. The peaceful Fellaheen of Bashan in this present year of our Lord goes forth armed and in companies to plow, for fear of the robbers, and worships at the shrine in the grove on the hill-top, as did his fathers in the time of Nimrod and the Accadians. That in the time of Jesus the robbers were religious fanatics, who murdered and pillaged only the ungodly Gentile, was scarcely a variation. The robbers of Bashan are to-day religious fanatics, and giant Og and Sihon were devout worshippers of Baal and Ashtaroth.

The report of Jacobus that the Roman soldiers are coming is received in silence by his comrades, and not one changes countenance or shows any visible sign of fear or joy. Some of those who have been out all night are eating and drinking, and some have wrapped themselves in blankets and lain down on the hard rocks to sleep. Only a single man is placed on guard where the rugged path by which we entered turns in to the cave. The rest seem to be free to seek such recreation or employment as suits their inclination. Some are sharpening their swords and furnishing their armour and arms, and one, a sturdy blacksmith, is busy with hammer and forge, mending and making arms and armour. The cave is lighted with flaming torches, and some are intently reading from rolls of the Law. But hark! What sound is that, like the roll of

distant thunder, only it does not sink, but continues to grow and swell and roar, till it comes to a pause, directly overhead. All cease from their employments to listen; but there is no change, and work and reading are soon resumed.

To understand what is to follow in the next few days, it will be necessary to describe more fully this cave of Jacobus and his men, with its contents and surroundings. There are many caves in the Holy Land to-day. The cave of Adullam, where David collected four hundred men, is still pointed out to the curious traveler, and many others. Lot is spoken of as dwelling in caves, and even all Israel in Samuel's time hid "in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits." In Herod's time the Zealots of Galilee took refuge in the caves of Arbela, and were hunted down and nearly exterminated by means of huge wooden cages, each containing a considerable number of soldiers and let down by means of pulleys and ropes to the mouths of the caves from overhead. The knowledge and recollection of this success of Herod operated in a twofold manner in this present instance: it encouraged the Romans to try the same means, and it had already warned Jacobus and his band to provide beforehand the means of defense.

The mouth of the cave being about sixty feet in breadth at the opening, it was calculated that probably three cribs or cages filled with soldiers might be let down simultaneously, and to be prepared for such an event Jacobus had provided three large tree-trunks headed with iron and suspended by means of ropes and pulleys and ways. These three huge beams could be operated by a few men. Any number of cribs or cages let down from above and appearing in the mouth of the cave would be at once subject to attack by these huge battering rams, while the greater number of the defenders would be free to use their bows and arrows, swords and spears. The cave itself was made up of var-

ious large chambers and passages and there was another secret outlet besides the one we have described, which after many narrow winding turns came out upon a precipice even more steep and difficult than the one by which we entered. This last was used only to send out spies, and for other necessary occasions, and even its existence was as far as possible kept secret.

By this passage Jacobus now sent out Asa, a young man, to spy upon the Romans. After a few hours he returned with the intelligence that the Romans to the number of about two hundred men had begun making a permanent camp for themselves near by, and a messenger had gone off toward Kenath. "It is well," said Jacobus. "We shall no doubt have to fight, so let every man be prepared."

It was a full week after this before the Romans were ready for their attack, and during all that time the noise of horses' hoofs, of pounding and hammering, sounded dully overhead, and Asa brought daily news of what was going on. In the cave the Jewish ritual of daily prayers and observances was strictly observed, and on the Sabbath synagogue services were performed, in which Jesus, at the request of Jacobus, took the leading part. On the eve of the second Sabbath of the siege Asa brought word that the cribs of the Romans were completed and that there was every indication that an attack would be made on the following day. The Romans, knowing the extreme reluctance of the Jews to engage in any, even the most necessary, worldly occupation on the Sabbath, and remembering many occasions when great numbers of them had suffered death rather than defend themselves on that day, had shrewdly chosen the Sabbath for their attack. Indeed, Jacobus and his band, as their name and organization implied, were Zealots for the strictest observance of the Law. They had separated themselves from their brethren, for one reason, because of the degeneracy of the times and the slackness of the people in Sabbath and other observances.

Should they now for *any* cause prove themselves remiss? In true democratic spirit Jacobus called a council of the whole band and laid the matter before them, with Jesus in their midst. For a long time they sat in silence, each waiting for the other.

At length Menahem, the brother of Jacobus, and older than he, spoke and said: "Brethren, it needs only that we remember our principles and the oath that binds us together, to show us the right path. Who are we? Have we not named ourselves Zealots for the Law, and set ourselves up as a fire beacon on a hill, as a banner in battle, to be imitated and followed, and shall we now upon the first trial prove recreant, and for so poor a cause as the saving of our own lives? Shall we transgress what we live only to maintain? Besides, we are to remember that the God of Israel never forsakes those who fully trust in Him. Gideon, at God's command, fearlessly attacked an innumerable host with three hundred men and gained the victory. Abraham, with knife in hand, stood ready to plunge it into the heart of his only son. Obedience to God is the foundation rock upon which we profess to stand, and perfect obedience is always answered by favor, by victory. Let us cast away all fear of men and trust only in God."

Several other speakers followed in the same vein and, curiously enough, Boaz and Jehu, who were as often found worshipping at the heathen shrines as at Jerusalem, in rude, sententious speech made known their desire to stand strictly by the letter of the law and trust in God for deliverance. There seemed, indeed, to be but one opinion: all who spoke were in favor of retiring into remote chambers of the cave, blockade the entrance, and defer fighting on any active defense till the Sabbath was past.

At length, when nearly every one had spoken, all eyes were turned upon Jacobus and Jesus, who stood together. The great leader could no longer withhold his opinion and spoke as follows: "It rejoices my heart indeed to find such

faith and zeal in you all, and whatever our fate may be as individuals, such faith and zeal are the heralds of final victory. 'God with us' should come as the cry of the deepest and strongest thing in us, and when it is so God *will be with us*." A murmur of approval greeted this exordium of Jacobus, but he did not notice and with solemn, set face proceeded: "And yet we must not be blind to what God in all his ways is continually trying to teach us; God's purposes do not change, but his methods do. The Patriarchs talked with God. Moses received the Law face to face with the Almighty. The Fathers lived to great age, five, seven and nine hundred years. There were giants in those days, and the sons of God cohabited with the daughters of men. The Patriarchs lived as the very children of God, little children, almost without labor and without care. Like the ravens and the birds of the air their Heavenly Father fed them. Like the lilies of the field he clothed them. He made coats of skins for our first parents in Eden. But these things are no longer so. God's method has changed: a different treatment is required for the full grown man from that needed for the little child. The man must think and act for himself. God's People are no longer little children: they are grown men, and must assume the duties and responsibilities of men. We must observe the Sabbath and keep the ordinances, not blindly as machines, but intelligently as men. We will keep the Sabbath as far as in us lies, but if wicked, heathen men force labor upon us, the sin be upon them and its penalty also. Besides, if we withdraw into the farthest recesses of our stronghold, and fortify, as we may, before the Sabbath is over, the enemy will be upon us and we must either do or die, and after surrendering all our advantages be forced to fight on even grounds an enemy of four times our number. It is my belief that we should fight now and here, calling on God to witness our innocence."

Jacobus paused and looked around; in the darkness of

the cave he could see but little, but felt that the stubborn old Jewish spirit, more fanatical and superstitious than reasonable and devout, had not been overcome. By the red glare of the torches lighting up a dark, grim face here and there among the group, he read disapproval, strong and, he feared, unalterable. Turning to Jesus, he spoke a few words to him in a low tone. Jesus at first seemed to hesitate, but looking up and meeting the large, open glance of Jacobus, the two leaders gazed a moment into each other's eyes—and understood. Then Jesus spoke.

“May the peace and the power of God be and abide with us at this time, my brothers.” These words, slowly uttered by Jesus, were commonplace words and were often used by Rabbis; but the tone, the emphasis, the voice, the magnetic presence were what no words, no pen can convey. They thrilled every heart like a voice from Heaven. “It is the Bath Quol,” murmured Boaz. Every eye was at once fixed upon the speaker, who went on: “I have thought it unbecoming for me, a mere carpenter, and so young besides, to offer advice to experienced men like you; and I cannot presume to do so of myself. I am a mere youth. I never wore armor, or learned to use a sword or a spear, but God, who can make use of whatsoever he has made for his own purposes, may speak to us through any means He may choose,—through winds, or fire, or even unclean beasts: for did not even the ass speak out and warn Balaam of the sworded Angel in the way. And so if what I say is found right and true, I pray you let it be as if God spoke through me to make known his will. We have here no Urim and Thummim, no Priest or Levite, but God may be in our midst as well, for we are all His children. As our brother Jacobus has said, ‘God’s purposes do not change, but his methods may and do.’ We no longer have the Urim and Thummim, but we still have God as our Father. Moses, because of ignorance and hardness of hearts, made many laws that no one now

regards as binding. The fourth commandment, like all the other commandments given at Sinai and graven on the tablets of stone by God Himself, will never be put aside: they all must stand forever. But the interpretation of them, the interpretation put upon them by men like ourselves, may change. The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. This it seems to me was God's design.

“Rest, worship, social pleasures, peace, are the rule for God's Holy Day: these are good for man, they save and adorn life, they bless. The Sabbath was given us for that. Shall we dare degrade it to a superstition, and because it is Sabbath offer our throats to heathen swords and the cause of God to destruction? Surely God would not have it so. God would have us do good on the Sabbath Day rather than permit evil; but what *is* good in a cause like this? God has not yet shown me. ‘Thou shalt not kill’ is as clear a command as ‘Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy’; and yet, as all our Rabbis teach, the Messiah himself, whose coming is surely at hand, will be a warrior who will cut down and destroy till the earth shall be covered with the slain.” Jesus ceased speaking and there was a long silence.

Menahem was the first to speak. “The young Rabbi is right,” he said. “God indeed has spoken through him, for his words are words of truth and soberness. If to do good is to keep the Sabbath, we may keep the Sabbath by destroying God's enemies.”

The meeting was about to break up, when Jesus again arrested attention. “You will forgive me,” he said, “if I appear officious, but our God sometimes sees fit to save His People, even by weak women, as by Deborah and Judith and Esther. Now it appears that this place overhead where the Romans are is cut off by impassable chasms on all sides but one, and that, a very narrow way easily obstructed and defended. It appears also that if

the Romans are to attack us in the way you describe a few men, and only a few, will be left above to manage the machinery for lowering the cribs, while the greater part, and the best fighting men, will come down in the cribs. If these cribs are lowered swiftly and all together, as no doubt is planned, and they come to a standstill just below the mouth of the cave, so that all their men can spring out together, we shall certainly be outnumbered.

“Our rams may not be able to strike quickly enough or times enough to accomplish much unless by some means we can bring the cribs to a pause in front of our cave, or in some way break up their arrangement so we will not have to meet all their force at once. Now God has sent me this thought, that if a few of our men were to go up in the night by the secret passage and be ready in the morning upon a given signal to attack the operators of the machinery by which the cribs are lowered, it would be likely to throw them into confusion, and might very likely bring the cribs against us, one at a time instead of all together. Then our men, so sent above, could in a proper case cut off the retreat of the Romans and, it may be, make your victory complete. I merely offer this as a suggestion. It is for you who are older and more experienced to act upon it or not, as seems to you best.”

There was silence again and at last Jacobus spoke, “Our young Rabbi is very wise,” he said, “and his counsel shall stand.” And Jacobus at once chose a number of men and instructed them how to act upon the advice given by Jesus.

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With the first faint gleam of morning light struggling down to the mouth of the cave Jacobus and his band were up and doing. Jesus, who had spent much of the night in prayer, was looked to to take the lead in the priestly offices of Sabbath morning service, as naturally as if he had been ordained thereto by the laying on of hands. He did not

need to read the Scripture lesson but repeated appropriate passages from memory, and after the Shema and the Benedictions prayed aloud in words of his own choosing for the divine guidance and protection.

While he was praying, the confused sounds of tramping and pounding overhead had grown louder and louder, and now with the warning call of the sentry at the cave's mouth came the sound of rattling chains and the bang and jar of heavy objects against the wall of the chasm overhead. But not a man moved or turned his head; and Jesus, with serene, uplifted face, continued his prayer without haste or cutting short. With his last words the three great cribs began to darken the mouth of the cave, and with the last word of the prayer every man sprang to his feet.

The battle which followed we will not attempt to describe in all its horrible details. The fact, well understood in all these encounters of the Jews with the Romans, that no quarter was to be asked or expected gave to them a character of savage ferocity that jungle-tigers could not excel. It was "Your life or mine" and no mercy. Had all worked as planned nothing could have saved the little band of Jacobus from utter destruction; but now the wisdom of the advice given by Jesus became conspicuous. By a blast on a ram's-horn Jacobus now gave the signal to the men that had been sent above, who, with an answering shout, began at once an attack on the men who operated the machinery for letting down the cribs. The result was that instead of moving side by side and arriving simultaneously at the mouth of the cave, two of the cribs were arrested in their descent and left dangling helpless in air above, while the one crib that was let down was exposed to the combined attacks of all the forces in the cave, and was soon beaten into splinters, and its crew destroyed. The second crib shared a similar fate when later it was let down; and finally there remained but the one crib,—that

containing the captain of the band. When at last this was let down it became at once apparent that its chances of success were even less than had been the others. The defenders of the cave had gained skill by practice; their courage had been increased by success. The Roman captain saw at once the hopelessness of his undertaking and signaled to be drawn up. But this expedient could not now avail.

One of the rams, instead of being drawn back for further blows, was pushed out and held firmly above the crib, thereby stopping its ascent farther than the top of the cave's mouth. In this position, exposed helplessly to the blows of the two other rams, it was beaten into splinters. At last only one man remained, clinging to the broken wreck. It was the Captain. It could be seen that he was helpless from wounds and broken limbs; but with true Roman fortitude he disdained to ask for mercy and with a look of calm defiance awaited his fate. A great beam was drawn back for the final blow, when Jesus appeared in the mouth of the cave and interposed.

"This is murder," he said, raising a warning hand. "Your object is accomplished, and this man's life may be precious in God's sight."

Jesus spoke calmly and kindly, but with a certain air of authority; and though there was some grumbling and muttering about "dead men telling no tales," he was obeyed, and a ladder placed for the Roman to descend to the cave. Jesus took hold of him to steady him from falling and led him away. At the same time Jacobus and his men, storming up the narrow path before described, went to the assistance of their comrades overhead. A few minutes later the bodies of slain men and horses began raining past the mouth of the cave, and Jesus, who was left alone with the captives, shuddered and turned away.

XII

VARUS

"Of such stuff were the Galilean Zealots made; and we have to take this intense, Nationalist tendency into account in the history of Jesus."—EDERSHEIM.

The days which followed the slaughter of the Romans were days of extreme labor and anxiety for Jacobus and his band. They knew full well that such a terrible blow against the power and majesty of Rome would not be passed over or forgotten by this haughty mistress of the world.

Jewish friends, acting as spies in Kenath and Bostra, had promptly informed them that preparations were being made on a large scale to besiege their stronghold with a considerable army, and they knew that they would be starved out if not overcome in battle. The case admitted of no debate, and preparations were made at once to break up their organization for the time being, with the expectation of reassembling at some future time and place. Already the captive women and children have been driven away and sold to Aretas, to be by him carried away to Egypt, the great slave mart of the world, and sold into hopeless bondage. All the stores and provisions have been removed to dry cisterns, holes in the rocks, and smaller caves known only to these outlaws, and to-morrow the band of Jacobus will be scattered to the four winds,— some with Aretas and his wild Ishmaelites on the desert sands, some in the inaccessible, fever-infested morasses of Merom and the ice-bound peaks of Lebanon, and some in disguise, hunted like wild beasts, but ever as implacable apostles of an avenging Nemesis, to foment bitterness, hatred, and war in the heart of fair Galilee.

And so it is night again in old Og's cave,— night, but almost morning, and the hive will soon be astir. There is a smouldering fire, and two great torches, burnt almost to ashes but giving out a fitful flickering light, hang awry by the wall. Standing near the fire are two figures whom, on drawing near, we recognize as Jesus and Jacobus. They are alone, and yet not alone, for as Jacobus stirs the embers with his mailed foot and we peer into the darkness beyond, we can see the prostrate forms of men asleep on the rock floor, with their arms by their sides.

Jesus is speaking. "Yes, I had thought to cast in my lot with you, and to devote my life as you do yours to the extermination of the Heathen. Then I saw your lawless lives of plunder and devastation. I saw men and boys murdered, whose only sin was that they were named Romans or belonged to Rome, and women and innocent children driven away, weeping, into slavery. I saw this last butchery of a whole Roman cohort with a horror that I cannot overcome or suppress. It was forced upon me to see that many of those soldiers, young men, had noble, gentle faces, no doubt had mothers, sisters, and sweet-hearts, and may be wives and children, whom they loved and were loved by; and I cannot but think that they, like our selves, were only victims of a powerful and remorseless *system* of wrong that they were powerless to resist or to amend. They had no ill will towards you or me or towards our nation; they were only cogs in a great wheel. They must obey their masters or die, and those masters must obey other and higher masters, and so on up till we come to the throne of Cæsar himself, and he, perhaps, is only a wheel in the great MACHINE that moves and grinds the nations to powder, subject only to the will of God."

Jesus paused and Jacobus after a time made answer: "Your words are true, O my brother; they pierce deep, they cannot be denied; and yet — and yet — remains the record and the lesson: Moses and Joshua were sent of God,

not only to dispossess a whole people of their homes and country, but even to exterminate them from the face of the earth, and it has always appeared to me that those old Canaanites were a better people than these Romans. They are to-day, what there is left of them, and yet look at the record and learn the lesson. Moses was commanded to dispossess and exterminate, and Joshua was commissioned to carry out God's command. In so far as he did so and killed all men, women, and children it was well, and God's blessing followed. Wherein Joshua failed, wherein he was pitiful and spared it went ill, and judgment followed. Even vengeance for long past wrongs was not to be forgotten, as in the case of Amalek. 'Thou shalt not forget it,' saith the Lord, and Samuel, whom God called, hewed Agag in pieces before the eyes of the horrified Saul, — Samuel, the mild, loving, tender hearted man of God, who never offered up a lamb on the altar without a tear, and Saul, the lion hearted warrior who could fall on his own spear rather than live in servitude. And yet the heart of Saul was pitiful, and he spared whom God said kill; and for that, for pitying and sparing when women and children cried and lifted up helpless hands, God wrested the Kingdom from him, and gave it to one who had a heart to destroy the heathen prisoners taken in battle 'even with saws and harrows of iron and with axes.' O my brother, I had hoped that you might be *our* Samuel, even if I were to be a Saul, for my heart, even as yours, is pitiful. I would love to spare; but we must learn the lesson of all our past and steel our hearts like flint, for 'vengeance is mine' saith the Lord, 'and I will repay.'"

While Jacobus was speaking several of the sleepers awoke and stole to the fire, one at a time, and sat down in silence. Jesus and Jacobus, who had been up all night, alone remained standing. They felt no weariness. When at length Jesus began to make reply, five or six of the band had gathered round, for it was nearly daybreak.

Jacobus' three brothers were there, and Simon of Clopas, and Boaz, who flung some fresh fuel on the fire, for the air was damp and chill, and the dancing flames lighted up the old cave and shone in the faces of the group about the fire, making a picture to be seen but once and never forgotten, — the bearded, dark, stern, and care-worn faces of Jacobus and his men and the clear, serene, beautiful face of Jesus.

Neither Jesus nor Jacobus heeded the coming of the men; they seemed not to know it, and Jesus answered as if he were alone with Jacobus. "Yes," he said, "all these things I had thought of, and when I left Tiberias I thought I had made up my mind to cast in my lot with you and do all I could to help on the cause. I was even fierce to fight: I thought I wanted to shed blood. I thought that you and your band were the only ones in Israel who were doing God's work, you only were worthy to be called God's Chosen. And I felt ashamed and guilty that I had so long hesitated and refused to join you; but then other thoughts came, and self questioning. Why did I wish to fight the Romans, and to destroy them? Was it because they were offensive to God or only to my poor puny self! Whom and what would I vindicate by fighting! Eternal Truth or only self! Did I hate the Romans because of their sins against humanity or because of their sins against me and mine! These are grave questions for us all. I have not answered them yet to myself, I am not entirely clear. When the Messiah comes, He alone will have no grudges! In His own person He will have suffered nothing. He will be as the right-hand of God. He will be appointed of God to execute judgment upon the wicked. But who hath appointed *me* to execute judgment! Who hath appointed *you*, or any man! We should all consider these things before we shed blood, before we take away the life of a brother man.

"Again, as the lessons taught by Moses and the Proph-

ets, I have pondered upon this all my life; and it seems to me now that we have mistaken the true meaning. Running through all the sacred writings as the central thought the end and aim is Universal Peace and Brotherly Love. 'Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth, lest the Lord see it and it displease Him' saith the Proverbs; and again it is foretold that the day will surely come when 'nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and learn war no more; when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.' How beautiful it is to think of and, as I said, I have pondered these things all my life, and the feeling more and more takes hold upon me that to do good and not evil, to save life and not destroy it, to love and not hate, is the law of life.

"You, here, just among your own selves obey this law. You take pleasure in serving one another: you would willingly die for one another. All is said when we say, you worship God and love one another. Think what it would be if all Israel could be that way: I had almost said all men, and really why not all men; for we are all God's children and, I have learned, all very much alike. And about angry fighting of all sorts, I want to tell you how that has come to appear to me. When I was a stripling boy I was once shamefully abused by a great, rough, Canaanitish man in Nazareth. I was made extremely angry, and but for some of the bystanders dragging me away I should have flown at the man, weak and small as I was, and no doubt have been killed. But, as it was, for days and days after I had no peace or rest and my nights were passed in agony. If I slept at all it was to dream of fighting that man, of flying through the air with wings like an archangel and striking him down with resistless force. I could not eat, and grew thin and weak. I was

like one possessed of a devil, and no doubt I was. But still, though I saw the man who had abused me daily in the market place, I did not attack him; and why?

“I asked myself this question, and there could be but one answer: *Because I was afraid!* I did not attempt this deed which with my whole soul I so longed to do, because of fear, cowardly fear. When I thought of it this way it drove me more nearly mad than all the rest. The thought that I was prevented from doing what I looked upon as a just and righteous action by the fear of a man seemed to me the lowest depths of humiliation. And is it not so? This boyish experience of mine has been in my thoughts so much and has grown in me until it seems to me that a man to be wholly clear and upright must fear nothing at all but God. Perhaps this is the last perfection of human virtue, but should it not be the aim? And to attain to this we must surely give up fighting altogether. Because if our method is to fight for what we want there may always be something in the way of our getting it far more powerful than we are, which we must necessarily fear. We must refuse to fight from principle because of God, and not at all because of man. And when we do this we shall not suffer the humiliation of fear. We will as quickly refuse to fight our equal or our inferior, over whom we would be sure to prevail, as to fight one greatly our superior, with whom we would have no chance and whom we would fear. If we are to fight and would be altogether brave and heroic, like Samson and Shamgar and Gideon, we must, like them, take no account of the size or strength of our enemy, but simply and alone fight a world in arms as readily as we would a dwarf or a weakling. You, here, have almost attained to this, but not quite. You scatter and disperse to-day because of fear. There are very few sons of Abraham anywhere to-day whose hearts are not as yours, eager and waiting to see the Roman power destroyed; but they refuse to fight because they fear. The

truth seems to be in this, as in other things, that God's method has changed. His objects, once gained by force, required but a single man with an ass's jaw bone or an ox goad to bring them about, while now all Israel in arms might be vain."

A loud call from the sentinel at the entrance now warned them that the light of day was beginning to appear, and the whole band now gathered about Jesus, united with him in repeating the Shema, "Hear O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord . . ." and then, after singing a Psalm, prepared to go. There were many tender leave-takings, and, as in the beginning, those ancient forms of words with which Abraham and Lot went out from the old home in Ur of the Chaldees, again had use and meaning,—as "God be gracious to thee," "God give thee peace," "May the Angel of God spread his wings over thee and keep thee." They were not now vain words, but spoken with tear-dimmed eyes and trembling voices. Many fell upon one another's breasts and wept aloud.

And so, as was fit, Jesus and the Roman officer whom he had saved were left alone in the cave. The Roman, with broken arm and crushed foot, could walk only with great difficulty, and Jesus helped him climb the steep and rugged path to the plateau and then on some distance towards the nearest city, Kenath, where a Roman garrison would take him in. When the walking became more easy, the Roman refused to go farther and sat down on a rock.

"I cannot permit you to endanger your life further on my account," he said. "We are likely to fall in with Roman soldiers now at any time, and I might not be able to save your life if you should be taken; and, besides, I can get along now. There are peasants in the fields not far away and they will help me. But before we part I feel bound by the honor of a Roman soldier to tell you what you little suspect, and that when known may change your

feeling towards me so far that instead of wishing to save my life you may wish to take it. However, I owe you my life. You have saved me from death and I wish not to part till I have at least offered to pay my debt in the only way I can. I must tell you who it is whose life you have saved, and then you can pay me in my own coin if you see fit to do so. You will of course remember, when a boy tending sheep in the mountains in Galilee, being knocked senseless and left for dead by a young Roman captain." The eyes of Jesus during this recital were fixed upon the Roman in sad, calm scrutiny but his countenance did not change; he only nodded in assent, and the Roman went on: "Well, I was that Roman captain, and my name is Varus, and now you may have your revenge."

The man raised his eyes to meet the eyes of Jesus, still fixed upon him with the same sad, wistful expression that was habitual to him, and was amazed. "Perhaps I am mistaken," he said. "But your face is one not easily forgotten and, besides, one of the women prisoners in the cave had somehow found out and she told me that your name was Jesus and that you were of Nazareth."

"And you, a Roman, remembered, and you thought that I, a Jew, had forgotten! Jews do not forget."

"And yet you saved my life, bound up my wounds, and served me in the most menial offices!" exclaimed the Roman, incredulously. "You could not have known me at the first and have done these things."

"Yes, I knew you all the time: Jews do not forget. But I saw you were awake and listening to what I said this morning in the cave about fighting and killing; may not that explain?"

"Yes, I heard what you said and was astonished beyond measure, at first, but then I thought that after all you were like all the other philosophers, Roman and Greek, that I have known or have read or heard about: they discourse very beautifully and point out the way for men to

reach perfection, but they themselves continue to live like the rest of the world."

"Yes, it is easy to preach but hard to practice," answered Jesus. "But go you, and do as I have done; and may the peace of God be with you. Farewell." And turning about Jesus retraced his steps and was soon lost to sight among the rocks.

XIII

THE BOND WOMAN

“The State is the curse of the Individual.”—IBSEN.

Again we are in the Wilderness of Ziph, and at the cave of Addi. It is ten years and more since we were here; but the scene has not changed. The little spring ever flows trickling from the rock. The trees of the grove still spread their umbrageous shade for a little space over the desert sands. The orange and the oleander, with almost perpetual flowers, still fill the air with fragrance, and the citron, the almond, the pomegranate, the olive, and the vine supply as before the simple wants of Addi in his cave. Addi himself has been long here,—had been here long when we first saw him ten years ago.

No one knows who he was or whence he came; but the fame of him, even in the slow East, has been noised abroad, and men in distress and doubt have come to him, as to Menahem the Essene, for help and guidance. As their hearts, so their expectations and demands. To those who, like Boaz, mingled the worship of God at Jerusalem with devotions at shrines and Mazars on hill-tops, he is a wizard and sorcerer, while to those of a purer faith he is a prophet and a man of God. Addi turns no man away, and at times a number of disciples have occupied the cave with him and shared his scanty fare. Men disappointed in love, overwhelmed by losses, defeated, spurned, and oppressed by enemies thought to find here the satisfactions that the world denied.

At first they hung upon the words of Addi as the oracle of God. They learned them by heart and repeated them in solitude like prayers. Then thoughts of the world they had left began to creep in: old passions and ambitions

awoke again, and secret longings for vengeance, for sensual and worldly satisfactions; and soon the words of the master grew hollow and meaningless, the days intolerably long and monotonous, and then without leave-taking or farewell they were gone.

Addi was not surprised, he did not complain: he only sighed and murmured a prayer. And now Jesus and our old acquaintance John are here. John has been here three years and has seen many disciples come and go. Jesus has been here but a short time,—as yet only a visitor: he has not fallen in with all the extreme austerities of Addi, as John has done. The simple fare of fruits, locusts, and wild honey he has easily adopted, for his diet has ever been plain and hard; and he repeats with Addi and John the Shema and the prayers that he learned at his mother's knee. Like Addi and John, he observes the stated feasts and the new moon, and on Sabbath mornings a service of worship such as Addi says was in use in the time of the Patriarchs when there were no Temples, and when those Babylonian abominations, the synagogues, were unknown. These things are as second nature to Jesus, and he falls in with them gracefully and without effort; but unlike John, who has become a full disciple and, like Addi, bathes his whole body many times each day in cold water and clothes himself only in the leaves and bark of trees, Jesus yet clings to his simple peasant's garb, and on Sabbath days after morning service goes off alone into the desert and returns only after nightfall.

One Sabbath evening Jesus had brought in a wounded fox. He had found it held down by a rock that had fallen upon it, and both its forelegs were broken. It was a great shock to Addi and to John. The animal was unclean. It was pollution to touch it. And, besides, Jesus had broken the Sabbath in rescuing it. How could Jesus do so! But Jesus with a few simple words brushed aside their objections and gave a new turn to their thoughts. "It is

one of God's creatures," he said. "God breathed into it, as into us, the breath of Life. Life! What is it? God alone can give it. Let man not take away needlessly what he cannot return." And so the fox, tenderly nursed by Jesus, lived, and refused when well to go back to the desert. It followed Jesus like a dog, and slept by his side.

There were many things in which Jesus differed from Addi and John, but in a manner so exalted and self-effacing that they were not offended and not only tolerated his objections but allowed them to take a place in their thoughts, and in spite of his dissent their respect and love for him grew insensibly with each day. Perhaps it was owing something to habit but more to insight and conviction that Jesus, unlike Addi and John, worked with his hands a few hours each day. He mildly argued with the others that work was the law of the Universe, and cited scripture to prove that Adam and Eve were required to work even in Eden, and that God himself worked. But Addi claimed to have passed to higher ground than Adam, and as for God, He had ceased to work since the world was made. Man, he said, was the noblest of God's creatures and if faithful towards God and true to his instincts need not work. The beasts of the field and the birds of the air took no thought for the morrow, and yet, he said, God provided for all their wants: how much more would He provide for men created in his own image.

And so in the years that Addi had occupied the cave the grove of trees and vines that grew about it had with long neglect fallen into a very wild and waste condition, which it was painful to Jesus to see. In that tropic clime and with never failing moisture supplied by the spring, a rank growth of harmful things had sprung up, and the once beautiful grove of fruitful trees and vines had become little better than a thicket of tangled thorns and briars.

In this grove Jesus worked each day, pruning and cutting away the evil weeds and rank growths, striving to

bring order again out of chaos and to make beautiful and productive what through neglect had become a waste, unproductive and unbeautiful. While Jesus worked Addi and John read and talked and dreamed,— their one book and their one subject, The Law, The Law, The Law. They went over together for the thousandth time Genesis, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, and the Prophets, discovering each day some new mystical meaning. The Hebrew method of numeration was made to contribute to this endless entanglement of scripture meaning. The Hebrew letters being used for numerals, any objectionable word in a verse might be changed for another of the same numerical value. We have instances of this method even as late as the Book of Revelations, where the name of the Beast is mystically expressed by the number 666, which, when expressed in letters, gives the name of *Nero*. Not only each word and syllable of the sacred text, but every letter was held to have various profound and mystical meanings, which by study, fasting, and prayer would be revealed to the pious votary.

One day in midsummer, sitting beneath the great orange tree that shaded the mouth of the cave, Addi had engaged Jesus and John in one of those endless discussions, and their subject was Ezekiel's vision of the wheel. Jesus, after listening intently as was his wont, without saying much himself, at last stole silently away to his work in the grove. It was intensely hot in that narrow gorge, and not a breath of air was stirring. The fox, now his constant companion, panting, put out its red tongue and looked up in Jesus' face, as if in mute rebuke of stirring abroad at such a time. The birds were all silent, the bulbuls and nightingales had sought the deepest recesses of the thickets, and even the noisy ravens had gone to the shelter of the rocks. No living thing was in sight but a vulture, high on a crag, with wings held motionless, outspread, as if to catch the faintest breeze. It was hard

working, and soon Jesus was wet with sweat, his clothes torn, and his hands pierced and bleeding with the thorns. He was thinking of Addi's teaching about the care of God for all His creatures,— the birds and beasts living without work or care, and the flowers coming forth in the wilderness, extravagant in color and beauty. And now in his path was a lily of a kind he had never seen before, more gorgeously beautiful and growing in the depths of a thicket where no human eye would ever see it. Jesus stooped to smell its perfume, and to examine it closely. Then, as he worked, the fox made its bed on the lily, marring all its delicate beauty, and went to sleep. In an orange tree overhead was the downy nest of a dove. Jesus looked into it and found the half-grown brood dead, with the flies swarming about them; and then he remembered how three days before he had seen the mother bird struck down and carried off by a prowling hawk. The pruning knife dropped from Jesus' hands and he stood long in thought, forgetful of his work, while the fox slept on and the flies swarmed and buzzed.

How long Jesus stood there he did not know. He was aroused at length by the bark of the fox, which sprang up in alarm and pressed close to his feet, looking off into the thicket. Presently Jesus heard some object making its way slowly and cautiously towards him. Jesus recovered his pruning knife, and further armed himself with a stout club; then he waited. At last, but still unseen, the object could be heard, pushing its way slowly through a copse of thorny Dardara and gigantic leaved Osher, close at hand. Then a hand and bare arm, skinny, emaciated, and bleeding with thorns was thrust out, putting aside the leaves of the Osher, followed by a dark, wild, haggard face, framed with matted locks of long hair, and then with bare feet, careful to avoid the thorns, stepped forth naked except for a tattered rag about the loins,— a woman.

When she saw Jesus she was at first terrified, and turned

as if to flee; but Jesus called to her, and she turned again and gave a wild, beseeching look into his face. Then she came and threw herself on the ground before him, embracing his feet with tears and cries for mercy. From the force of education and life-long habit, Jesus was shocked by the touch of this strange and unclean woman. Her hands and her tears on his feet had polluted him; then he thought it would not add to his pollution if he put his hand upon her. So he took her by the arm and lifted her up. "I could not help but eat of the fruit," cried the woman, "for I was starving."

Jesus reassured her with kind words, and having caused her to sit down he went to the cave and brought her a garment of camel's hair and some locusts and wild honey. After she had eaten, the woman told her story. "I am a Syrian woman, and my home is in Sepphoris, of Galilee. I had a husband and four children. My husband and I were of the household of Herod, and we were prosperous and happy. Then there came a day when the Evil Spirit brought a disease of the eyes among us, and we were all stricken with it. We employed many physicians, and bought amulets and charms; we made gifts at the Great Mazar of Chorazin: but we only grew worse. Then there came an Egyptian Magic Doctor, who said that for a thousand shekels of silver he would cure us all, and so my husband gave himself and his family in pledge for the thousand shekels and we gave them to the Egyptian. Me he cured, but the others he cured not, but demanded still other thousand shekels, which we could in nowise procure, and being now blind neither my husband nor children could earn anything; and when the thousand shekels were due, we, having nothing with which to pay, were all of us sold for slaves. My husband and children, being blind, brought but little, and I was haled away and sent with a caravan that was going to Egypt. When we reached Bozrah, that is in Midian beyond Moab, I escaped from

the caravan at night, and since then have been lost and wandering in the desert, I know not how long, for I have lost all reckoning. It must have been a long time ago, for I who was then a young woman am now quite old. See how skinny and shrunken my arms are, and how the white is in my hair."

XIV

THE MAGI

“Of course the Jews (or many of them), like most Ancients, believed in the influence of the planets upon the destiny of man.”—
EDERSHEIM.

It so happened that while Jesus was talking with the bondwoman there appeared three strange men before the cave of Addi. They were all men of distinguished bearing and came riding on camels, with servants and equipage such as belonged to men of wealth and station. Having made the usual salutations and having stated the object of their visit, they were made welcome by Addi, and their servants proceeded at once to set up tents and prepare for a somewhat lengthened sojourn, for which ample provision seemed to have been made. There was grain and provender for the camels, and food in variety and abundance for men, with ample, well filled wine skins, and rich eastern fabrics for bedding and change of raiment.

When Jesus returned to the cave he found the three visitors seated with Addi and John under the great orange tree and already engaged in earnest conversation. The strangers were made known to him as Rabbis — Raf, from Persia, Alkim from India, and Gamaliel from Jerusalem. The two former had come first to Jerusalem, where they had spent many days in the schools of the Temple, and remaining yet unsatisfied in their search after hidden knowledge had easily prevailed on Gamaliel to accompany them to the cave of Addi. It had long been the settled policy of Jerusalemites of all classes and callings to encourage pilgrimages to the Holy Land, for they were a source of immense revenue and profit to its inhabitants. Gamaliel shared this feeling, and when Raf and Alkim proposed a

visit to Addi and Menahem, though he secretly despised those austere sectaries and regarded their fame as an evidence of human depravity, he cheerfully acquiesced in the suggested visit, and even encouraged a reverential regard for those holy men.

Jesus had scarcely joined the group at the cave when another man was seen approaching on foot and alone. He was clothed in a single garment of coarse cloth that had originally been pure white, but which from long wear without washing had become very dark and grimy. He seemed quite old and feeble, and walked tremblingly, leaning upon a staff. His snow-white hair and beard were long and matted, while his hands and face and bare feet were dirty and repulsive. When he came up the old man passed before the group under the tree, and leaning with both hands upon his staff looked earnestly at them and saluted. "May the peace of God be with you." Jesus and Raf and Alkim returned the salutation, but the others stared blankly at the stranger and remained silent. No one then spoke for some time, and after the old man had regarded each member of the group before him with silent questioning, his worn face settled into a look of bitter despondency and he moved feebly away. Gamaliel, noticing the look of surprise on the faces of Raf and Alkim, explained to them that the old man's dress of white was that of an Essene, but that his dirt and squalor indicated Levitical uncleanness. Gamaliel said he was probably an Amhaarets,— one of the "accursed common people" with whom it was unlawful for Rabbis to have any communication.

While Gamaliel was talking Jesus and John got up and followed after the old man; they both remembered him as Shilath, one of the Essenes whom they had seen with Menahem and Cochiba. After they had found a place for him among the servants of Raf and Alkim they returned to the cave and told who it was who had been turned away. To

which Addi answered that if Shilath was really one learned in the Law he might after suitable prayers and ablutions be received among them at the cave. Shilath, meantime, though welcomed among the servants of Raf and Alkim, was little able to profit by their hospitality. For some offense that he did not explain he had been expelled from the Essene congregation, but, still bound by his oath, he dared not violate his obligation as an Essene, and to partake of food prepared or even touched by a common Jew (much less by a Gentile) was unpardonable sin. All he dared eat while in exile was fruit and fresh herbs gathered by his own hand: even the dried locusts of Addi and John were to him an abomination as being flesh, animal food, which to Essenes was forbidden.

And so with such an austere and exclusive Jew as Addi, Shilath, a fugitive and a homeless wanderer, could not eat without defilement, without breaking an oath so solemn and awful that many Essenes had been known to starve to death rather than do so. An Essene expelled from his Order was cut off and separated from human society almost as completely as if he were the only man on the earth. To him every human creature was as one leprous and unclean. So, too, for Addi and John there could be no intimate domestic association with the Rabbis Raf and Alkim, and even that Arch Pharisee Gamaliel, who himself regarded as pollution the touch of any ordinary Jew or even of any ordinary Pharisee, was to their superior sanctity as one unclean. All these could sit down together in the open air and converse, but they could not eat together or touch one another. They must not touch a garment, a stool, a cup, or any article belonging to one outside of their Order.

To Raf and Alkim these hypercritical distinctions were somewhat surprising, but were not wholly new or strange. Born and bred and steeped, as they were, in a kindred orientalism and having come with the hope and expecta-

tion of finding that which was superior and great, they naturally accepted the conditions and conclusions. Like the rest of the world they saw in the extreme austerities of Shilath and Addi that mortification and total subjection of the flesh and the purification and elevation of the spirit so clearly pointed out and commended in the books of Daniel and Esdras and in the life of Elijah. Perhaps no tenet of the Jewish religion was at this time more firmly established or more universally believed than that by fasting and prayer and constant study of the Law men might become equal with the angels and command the most hidden secrets of the Most High, for was it not well known how the Rabbi Eliezar had by his word alone uprooted trees, caused great walls of stone to bow down, turned streams backwards, and performed other miracles. And the Rabbi Rambau, the son of Nachman, who did not know that he had been called by the Bath Quol to decide a dispute between God and the Angels in the Sanhedrim of Heaven, and that miracles without number had been wrought at his grave?

On the day after the events above narrated, when the company were all assembled about the cave of Addi, Jesus asked them to consider a subject which, he said, was troubling him, before they took up the deeper matters that they had in view. And then he told them about the Syrian woman whom he had found in the thicket. A silence followed, while the dark faces grew severe, and frowning brows bespoke the disapprobation with which Jesus' announcement was received.

Addi was the first to speak. "Your youth," he said sternly, addressing Jesus, "will in some measure excuse you, but do not forget hereafter that women, especially of the class you speak of, are to us as if they were not. What say you, brothers Raf and Alkim and Gamaliel?"

"The learned and pious Master has spoken right," answered Gamaliel. "A Master in Israel is not to speak

even to his own wife in public, and to put forth a hand to save the life of a heathen woman is forbidden."

Then Alkim: "In our Eastern land, where we are still but as strangers and sojourners, it is asserted by some of our most learned Rabbis that we of the covenant and of Abraham have taken on something and become in some slight degree contaminated by the heathen people around us. It was partly to ascertain if this was so and to what extent that Brother Raf and myself have come to this Holy Land of our Fathers. In the matter of women, however, I would say that we of the East have not fallen away, but with the most distinguished, learned, and reverend Masters who have spoken we are in accord; and not only are we in accord, but we go even farther: it is said with us, if a Rabbi would attain to the highest place, learn the Ineffable Name, and command the Angels he would not put forth a hand to save his own mother from drowning if he had to touch her."

"It is enough," said Addi, "we will say no more of the woman, only to warn our young disciple that the creature he takes so much interest in may very likely be a cunning witch sent to destroy him; and I will here impart to him a secret spell by which he may overcome the wiles of a witch or of the evil eye. It is unlawful for me to repeat it but once; and if you fail to remember it exactly as I repeat it, it will avail you nothing. Now mark," and Addi repeated: "Hot filth, into your mouths from baskets with holes, ye witching women. Let your head become bald, and the wind scatter your bread-crumbs. Let it carry away your spices. Let the fresh saffron which you carry in your hands be scattered. Agrath, Azelath, Asiya, Belusiya are already killed by arrows. Burst, curst, Bartit, Bar-tena, Chashmagoz, Merigoz, Isteaham."

Although Addi had purposely repeated the formula with extreme rapidity and mumbled the words so it required the closest attention to understand them at all, there was

not one of his hearers who did not catch every word and syllable and was not able to repeat them afterwards. No pupil in the schools could hope to attain to the dignity of a Rabbi to whom the saying of a Master had to be repeated. After giving his formula Addi turned at once to Raf and Alkim and said, "Perhaps the learned brothers from the East could give the disciple a more powerful spell than the one I have given. I have many times heard it said that the Ineffable Name and all the secret words used by Solomon to work miracles have not been wholly lost, but are still and always to be known by some *one* in Israel."

All eyes were now turned to Raf, who, as coming from the land of the original Magi, was looked upon as most deeply versed in that kind of hidden lore they were considering. "No doubt," said he, "that the signet ring of Solomon, with the Ineffable Name engraved upon it, is somewhere in existence at this day, and the secret words and names of the Angels with which he wrought so many miracles are known to be obtained by prayer and fasting and study. But of course they are not to be given except as they are received, and are not for a time and place like this. With us in the East the names of the Angels have proved to be the most potent spells with which to deal not only with witches but with the evil spirits that inform witches, and with all the hosts of Ashmedai and Lilith. But there is a great difficulty here in regard to the names of the Angels. It appears that except the few whose names and offices are known to all, such as Michael and Gabriel, Metatron, and all that class of Angels who have special powers and are charged with special work, the names are changed from time to time as their work or message changes, making it impossible except for the most profound and powerful Masters to make use of them. The names of the Angels used by Solomon, or even by Hezekiah, are not now serviceable because not only have

the names of the Angels been changed but the Angels themselves are changed. I am not informed how far the learned Masters of the West have progressed in this study, but the rumor has long been prevalent in the East that there was in the West a Brotherhood of those learned in this way beyond all others. The name given to them by those who have told us of them is 'Chitsonim,' and it was said that their abode was in the wilderness of Judea."

With the exception of Gamaliel, whose scornful expression revealed the contempt in which he secretly held these "Chitsonim" (Outsiders — Essenes), all eyes were now turned to Shilath. The old man, weak from lack of food, had sat thus far, with his back supported against the wall of rock, silent, grim, and motionless. Except for the gleaming black eyes, that glowed like fires beneath beetling dark brows, he appeared more like a corpse than a living man. When he opened his mouth to speak, his jaw trembled violently, and the sound that came out was only inarticulate mumblings.

Then, drawing himself together, he began again and said audibly, "It has been the will of God (and blessed be His name) that at no time should there be lacking a remnant in Israel who should obey His Laws, keep His statutes, and not bow the knee to Baal. That remnant to-day is the Essenes or, as the learned brother has seen fit to call them, Chitsonim, from whose fellowship I for unworthiness have been expelled. But though expelled, and doomed while life lasts to wander alone in the desert, I am still as much bound by my oath not to reveal the secrets of our Order as if I remained in full fellowship. I can tell you of what every one may know, that we follow strictly the Law as given by Moses, and discard all tradition. We send the usual gifts to the Temple at Jerusalem, but we partake in no blood sacrifice and obey literally the command, 'Thou shalt not kill.' We eat no meat and drink no wine. We promise to honor God and to in-

jure or hurt no man. We engage in no war. We resist not evil, nor return blow for blow. We keep no slaves and have no servants. We are to love truth, expose liars; and we have all property in common. We have no money. We bathe the whole body twice each day in cold water. Marriage is permitted, but not encouraged. We pray with our faces to the rising sun. Our only reading is the holy books and the Law. And so, as was promised, our sons and our daughters prophesy, our old men dream dreams, and our young men see visions.

“We are bound by an oath to keep nothing from a brother, and the same oath binds us to reveal no secret to another. To know more of our Order or its secrets, you must enter as a little child, no matter how old you are, and work gradually up by service, obedience, and study till you are found worthy to be intrusted with secrets which give command of the Angels and open the gates of Heaven.”

The old man paused from sheer exhaustion, and again leaned back against the wall of rock and closed his eyes. No one spoke for some time, when Alkim at last remarked gravely, “If our brother Shilath were not so well approved a son of Abraham, I should be apt to think of him and his Order as more like heathen Hindoos than as followers of Moses. The religion of India to-day has much in common with what the Brother has spoken, and it reminds me of what I have often heard, that zealous apostles of that religion have secretly gone abroad as missionaries into every land under the sun. I am told that, disguised as Hebrews, they have penetrated to the Holy City and have stood in the Court of Israel, teaching their doctrines to all who would listen. We know that northwards, in the vast unknown regions of Gog and Magog, they have gained entire control. They have penetrated to Sinim and Zipango. They call themselves Buddhists or Boodhists and are followers of one Siddhartha or Sakya-

Mouni, a great prophet who lived in India a very long time ago. I fear that the founder of the Essene Brotherhood must have listened to one of the missionaries I speak of."

Again there was silence, broken at length by Shilath. "I will not contend with the Brother," he said. "We are taught that all contention is vain, but if the Brother seeks truth, if he is tired of the falsity of all the world,— of its contentions and strifes,— if he seeks peace and joy in the love of God, in doing His will, in the fellowship of brethren, let him go to Father Menahem and begin as a little child to learn the things of God; and if the brother proves worthy, from him shall nothing be hid. He shall know the names of myriads of Angels and he shall have command of them. No evil spirit or noxious beast shall be able to do him harm. The bite of the serpent shall not kill, nor the poison that is in the cup. As it is written, 'The sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp; and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.'"

It was the last and supreme effort of Shilath, and it being evident that he could talk no more the subject was dropped, and that of Demons and those possessed with Devils was brought up. This question was discussed at some length and there appeared considerable disagreement of opinion. Addi took the more ancient view that all Demons or Shedim were originally the back-bones of persons who did not bow down to worship God. But Gamaliel and the others took the more advanced ground that Demons were the souls of the ancient Giants, of whom there were so many accounts in Scripture. They all agreed that Demons entered into and took possession of persons to their harm, causing various diseases and often compelling the person possessed to act strangely and even to become dangerous. It was also agreed that there were certain times, places, and circumstances when men were

specially liable to be attacked by Demons, as Wednesday and Sabbath eves, in a shadow cast by the moon, or after walking over water that had been poured out unless it had been covered with earth or spat upon.

As to remedies and defenses against Demons, there appeared here, as among modern doctors, a great diversity of opinion. It was agreed that amulets and charms were very efficacious against Demons generally, but Gamaliel called attention to the fact that he had often observed that even "probate" amulets,—amulets that had performed three unquestionable cures,—might afterwards be found useless where the person using it was at the time under an adverse star or constellation. He had known other failures from amulets, he said, where the names and numbers of the Demons sought to be exorcised was wrongly written on the amulet.

Then Gamaliel went on to tell of a plant called Baaras, which was known to certain of the learned in Judea and which, once laid hold of, enabled its possessor to cast out any Demon. "This plant," he asserted, "is of the color of flame and at evening sends out a ray like lightning. But it is death to any who touch it unless it first have the urine of a woman or her menstrual blood poured upon it. Then it may be dug and taken away, but only in one way. The root must hang down from the hand or otherwise it kills the man or animal that touches it. But the plant is very rare, and I know not any one who has ever seen it." * .

On the whole, Gamaliel was inclined to think that the power of exorcism, such as was possessed by Solomon and Hezekiah, had been lost, "That is to say," he explained, "though there are, no doubt, many instances where exorcism has proved wonderfully efficacious, and astonishing things are now done by these means, our power over Demons seems to be accidental and uncertain; the spells to

* Jos. War, vii, 6-3.

be used, the names of the Angels and also of the Demons are constantly changing, and we can no longer proceed by those fixed and immutable laws which seem to have governed in the olden time. Of course," he continued, bowing deferentially to Raf and Alkim, "I speak only of Palestine, the Holy Land. Perhaps it is true, as I have often heard, that among the Captivity the true knowledge has not been lost, and the secrets known to Moses and to Solomon have been preserved."

To which Alkim replied: "The Brother is right: it is the will of God that no great truth revealed by Him to His People shall be lost. As with the ark which Jeremiah buried on Mount Nebo, and the Sheclinah and the Urim and Thummim and Aaron's rod, and also like the promises of Jehovah, they only wait. When Shiloh comes all will be revealed. That the secrets concerning all these things are preserved among the Dispersed is not to be doubted. Ezekiel, as we know, and also Daniel must have been instructed in all knowledge. I will say no more, as it is unlawful to communicate such knowledge: it must be gained direct, as Moses and the prophets gained it, by fasting and prayer and study."

Here Addi broke in with well known quotations from the Holy Books. "'In those days,' says Daniel, 'I mourned three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh or wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three full weeks were fulfilled; then I lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold a certain man, clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz,' and in Esdras it is written how the Angel said to him, 'Go to the flowery open, where there is no house, and eat only the herbs of the field; taste no flesh, drink no wine; but eat herbs only, and pray unto the Highest continually; then will I come and talk with thee!'"

Conversation on these lines was continued for some time, and it was admitted by all that by solitude, fasting,

and prayer, the secret knowledge and prophetic visions as of old might be gained, with power over evil spirits and to work miracles. Then Raf reverted to what Gamaliel had said about adverse stars and constellations. "Our Jerusalem Brother," he said, "has spoken of the effect that stars have to destroy the good that is in amulets and charms. In the East this power that is in the stars has long been known, and it is believed by many of our most learned Rabbis that not only have the stars a most potent influence over men and events, but that through them God speaks to His People as He did formerly through the Shechinah and by the Urim and Thummim. One thing at least in this connection is certainly known,—that new and flaming stars and other extraordinary appearances in the heavens are sent as the forerunners of great prophets or great events. We all no doubt remember of hearing our fathers tell of the strange things seen in the heavens when Pompey polluted the Holy Place in the Temple, and again before the death of Cæsar.

"That wonderful star that we all must remember to have seen about twenty years ago was universally believed at the time to be the forerunner of the Messiah, and our Eastern Rabbis confidently predicted that he would shortly appear, and many of them even yet affirm that that star was the one referred to by Baalam when he prophesied of Israel. That the days of the Messiah are now close at hand, they all believe and they still look and pray daily for his coming." At this point, the time having arrived, Addi arose and began abruptly repeating a set prayer of the Jewish ritual. In this he was joined at once by Jesus and John, and later by Raf and Alkim and Gamaliel; and even Shilath, without opening his eyes and too weak to utter the words aloud, moved his lips in unison.

XV

THE PASSING OF SHILATH

"He dreaded not the greatest of all defilements,—that of contact with the dead, which Rabbinism had surrounded with endless terrors."—EDERSHEIM.

When the time came for breaking up, Raf and Alkim and Gamaliel went away to their tents, and Addi into his cave, leaving Jesus and John alone with Shilath. The old man opened his eyes and looked around, and made an effort to rise; but he seemed dizzy with weakness and fell back, bruising his head against the rock. Jesus looked at him pityingly, and said to John, "It can hardly be that God will look upon it as sin to put forth a hand to help this dying man."

"It does seem so," said John, "but you have heard him say that he is expelled from his own Brotherhood for sin, and his whole appearance is as of one unclean: he has not washed even his hands."

"Neither has he eaten," answered Jesus. "He is starving to death because our touch and our food are pollution to him, and we are consenting to his death before our eyes because *his* touch is pollution to *us*. O my Brother! There is something wrong in all this. Surely it cannot be the true way. If God is the Father of us all, this man is our brother, and the poor wretched woman who is hiding with the wild beasts in the thicket is our sister. In our painful grasping after dark and hidden knowledge, I fear we are blind to the greatest and the plainest truths."

John made no answer but turned away to his washings and private devotions, leaving Jesus alone with Shilath. The shadows of evening were already falling and the air was chill. Jesus offered to take Shilath up in his arms

and carry him away to the tents of the servants of Raf and Alkim; but Shilath motioned him away. Then Jesus brought ripe figs and other fruits, with caper buds, for Shilath to eat; but he refused them all, and reaching out his hand plucked the green leaves and pods from a wild lentil bush that ran up along the rock and filled his mouth with them. But he was too weak either to masticate or swallow such unwholesome food. Jesus was deeply troubled to know what to do. The servants of the Rabbis he knew would gladly do anything they could: but to the mind and heart of Shilath any assistance they could give was doing him violence.

Jesus sat down on a stone and leaned his face upon his hands. Then the fox, which had hidden away while the others were near, came and sat down before Jesus and looked up in his face. After a time, John, returning from his solitary devotions, passed by and entered the cave. Addi and he came out and bathed themselves and repeated the Shema, with other long prayers. At the same time could be heard from the tents of Gamaliel and Raf and Alkim the sound of voices loudly repeating the same prayers. Jesus sat alone, motionless, with vacant eyes. An hour later, and the full moon arose and poured its flood of mellow light over all, as it did on that night when the two lost children, with arms about each other's necks, wandered here ten years ago.

At last the tents were all silent, and Addi and John were asleep. A swarm of bats that lived in the cave flitted visible in the moonlight, making a noise with their wings, while from time to time a nightingale from the orange tree poured forth its mournful song.

And now, creeping out from the thicket into the moonlight, the figure of a man or a woman, in a long robe, with uncovered head and long, unbound hair, comes forward furtively, while the fox growls and takes refuge behind its master. At last the figure comes closer and looks at

Jesus and the dying man, and then sits down in silence and waits. It is the bondwoman of Sepphoris. Towards morning a pack of jackals came sneaking near but were driven away by the woman. When the light of day began to appear and there was a stir in the camp of the Rabbis, the woman got up and went away into the thicket. Addi and John came out and bathed and repeated their prayers, as did also the Rabbis farther away.

When at last the company were gathered again about the cave they stood aghast. Shilath lay dead with the green lentils between his teeth and a swarm of flies about him, while far overhead a number of vultures were slowly circling. Jesus, with eyes still fixed on vacancy, had not moved, and seemed unaware of aught about him till John shook him by the shoulder.

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That day Jesus did not meet with the Rabbis about the cave. He was already unclean from contact with Shilath. In carrying him away and burying him, he became like a leper to the scrupulous Rabbis, and must remain apart till duly cleansed and purified. Jesus himself scooped out a shallow grave in the desert sands, and with the help of the servants of the Rabbis carried Shilath and laid him in it. They found a much worn roll of the Law under his garment and next his heart. This was all of Shilath's earthly possessions. When the men carrying him went out past the thicket, the woman followed them; her head and face were covered, and her hands were full of flowers.

When Shilath was laid in the grave she came timidly forward and placed the flowers about his head and on his breast. Then Jesus spoke and told what he had learned about Shilath, and said that he could not look upon him other than as a brother man, one of God's children; and he believed that God would be pleased and not angry to have them perform these sad rites with loving care. Then Jesus prayed and said: "Our Father in Heaven! In

the presence of this death and what we are taught of the clean and the unclean, our hearts are troubled. Show us the real truth as it is in Thy Holy Law and help us to walk therein."

While Jesus was speaking, Esli, the servant of Alkim, looked earnestly at him, and Jesus looked earnestly at Esli. Esli had all the appearance and features of a high class Jew, and though somewhat past middle age was evidently hale and rugged. The other servants, though younger, were of the better sort, and all Jews.

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XVI

PROPHECY

“Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee.”—*LAMENTATIONS* xi, 14.

The next day, when the Rabbis were sitting with Addi and John, Jesus came again from the way of the desert. He was yet unclean to the scrupulous Rabbis and he sat down apart as a disciple not asked, nor offering, to take part in the discussions. The subject of the Messiah as the One Great Theme had occupied them most of the day before and was still before them. So long and so intensely had the Jewish mind been occupied by this subject, and so given was it to subtle scholastic speculations, that in the time of which we write almost every subject of human knowledge was made tributary to the Messianic expectation. There was scarcely a chapter of the Bible, from Genesis to Malachi, in which some Rabbi had not found reference to the promised deliverer.

Resuming a discourse of the previous day, Gamaliel was the first to speak. “As I was saying yesterday,” he began, “since it is agreed by all that Elias must first come as the forerunner of the Messiah, there should be the further agreement as to how we shall know Elias when he comes. The remarks of the learned brothers from the East yesterday revealed a wider divergence of opinion on this subject than I had before realized. That Elias would be known by his first restoring to Israel the golden pot of manna, the anointing oil, and Aaron’s rod that budded and bore fruit has been accepted with us here in the West as certain signs by which we should know him. There are many others, but these first of all. The saying of Raf that his coming should be known by a general and genuine

repentance in all Israel has not been so much insisted upon, but there are minor differences and of course all will in some way prove true. What a Rabbi has said cannot be disputed. The reference by the brother to Deuteronomy xviii as explained by Jeremiah xxxii, 31, no doubt points to a new covenant; but it is here believed that the new covenant referred to is to be established, not by Elias, but by the Messiah. Ezekiel xi, 19 is admitted to be a prophecy of the new covenant to be established by the Messiah and not by Elias."

To this Raf replied by quoting Genesis i, 2 and Samuel xi, 19. He affirmed that repentance as a necessary preparation for the coming of the Messiah was here fore-shown. To this Addi gave his support and quoted Jeremiah iii, 22. Gamaliel replied by referring to Isaiah lii, 3 and was answered by Alkim, who cited Malachi iii, 7. Gamaliel, thus opposed by all the other Rabbis, was not disconcerted, but retorted by quoting Jeremiah iii, 14. Then Raf responded by reference to Isaiah xxx, 15, and Gamaliel quoted Isaiah xlix, 7, whereupon Addi, still in opposition, quoted, more aptly, Jeremiah iv, 1, and was promptly answered by Gamaliel, who relied upon Daniel xii, 7. Both Jesus and John, as well as all the Rabbis, were so familiar with Scripture that they had no difficulty in following these arguments, their trained memories recalled instantly the passages cited, without having recourse to the written rolls.

The argument on these lines had been far more prolonged on the day previous, and it was felt that enough had been said on the subject for the present; and Raf, to change the subject, now asked, "When, then, do you say, that the Messiah will appear?" Gamaliel seemed to hesitate somewhat at this direct question and appeared loath to reply; but he answered at last, and said, "I would not be counted with those who say, as do many, that the times appointed for the coming of the Messiah are all past

and therefore he will not come. Even the Rabbi Hillel has said that the Messiah will no more come, because He has already been, in the days of King Hezekiah. With Rabbis Samuel and Jonathan I would say, rather, let their bones be broken who are so faithless. Certain times seem to have passed when many expected him, but we may learn from Habakkuk that it is for us to patiently wait, being ever sure that the Messiah will come; but when, I must admit myself unable to say, but it seems to me not near. There are so many things to come before the Messiah that I despair of seeing him in my day or for a long time to come. Rabbi Chanina has called attention to the fact that the Messiah cannot come till fish have been sought for the sick and cannot be found, as proved by Ezekiel xxx, 11-14 in connection with Ezekiel xxix, 21. Again it is said, according to Isaiah xviii, 5-7, that the Messiah cannot come till the foreign yoke shall be lifted from Israel. And again, according to Zephaniah iii, 11-12, he cannot come till there be no more proud in Israel; and according to Isaiah i, 26, till judges and rulers have ceased. There seems little present prospect of all these things being accomplished."

When Gamaliel paused, Addi answered him. "When thou seest a generation upon which sorrows come like a stream, then expect the Messiah, as shown by Isaiah lix, 19-20; and again, when darkness covers Israel, as in Isaiah ix, 2. And are we not now in sorrows like a stream, and does not darkness cover Israel?"

Following upon this was a long discussion about *when* the Messiah should appear. Of course Scripture grounds were alone taken, and innumerable passages cited, as well from the Book of Ruth and the Songs of Solomon as from the Prophets. After a time the discussion took wider range, and the name and personal appearance of the Messiah were minutely discussed,—what he would say

and do, and the condition of Palestine and of the world in Messianic times.

In all which Gamaliel alone, though professing in a general way an orthodox belief in the coming Redeemer, showed a secret leaning towards doubt and denial. He was not less under the dominion of tradition and authority than the others, but using his right as a Rabbi he interpreted differently and explained away.

He seemed, however, to take pride in showing his mastery of the subject by apt quotations, and gave a disquisition of some length on the hidden meaning of the Canticles. In so doing he first paid Raf and Alkim the compliment of observing that Canticles i, 8 no doubt referred to the dispersed among the Gentiles, and the promise was that they should be nourished in captivity until the time that the Messiah should be sent to them, who would "feed them in quietness." He then proceeded to verse 17 and said: "In this we may see a prediction of the Temple to be built by the Messiah, so much more glorious than that of Solomon, for "its beams are," as here indicated, "to be of the cedars of Paradise." In Canticles iii, 11, we find a clear reference to the Messiah, in that it describes Him as a Bridegroom rejoicing over the Bride, which is the Messiah rejoicing on that day when the new Sanctuary shall be built and Jerusalem redeemed. In Canticles v, 10, we are to learn that the Messiah is to be white to Israel, and according to Isaiah lxii, 2 he will be *red* to the Gentiles. This beautiful poem of Solomon's, which some have thought should be rejected from the Sacred Canon, is full of references to Him who is to come, many of which I pass over; but perhaps there is nothing in it more worthy of our attention just now than Canticles viii, 4. In this the King Messiah says: 'I adjure my people, House of Israel, why should you rise against the Gentiles to go out of captivity,

and why should you rebel against the might of Gog and Magog. Wait a little, till those nations are consumed which go up to trouble Israel. In those days the Lord will remember His chosen and set Israel free.' Again in Canticles viii, 1 we have it that at the time the King Messiah shall be revealed to the congregation the children of Israel shall say to him: 'Come and be a brother to us, and let us go up to Jerusalem and there suck with thee the meaning of the Law, as an infant its mother's breast.'"

It would be tedious to follow these learned Rabbis into all the details of this discussion. Enough has been told to show the trend and character of Rabbinic learning and research. As already indicated, the discussion we are considering soon fell into a rambling, broken, rhapsodical presentation of Scripture texts that were supposed to be prophetic of Messianic times, as Ezekiel xxv, 14, which Raf said meant that the Messiah would subdue all nations under his feet. Then Alkim showed the bias of his Hindoo surroundings by quoting Genesis v, 1 to prove, as he said, that the Messiah will not come till all souls predestined for it have appeared in human bodies on the earth. Gamaliel again spoke of Canticles i, 16, where it says, "Our bed is green," and connecting it with Jeremiah iii, 18 held that these passages contained the prediction that the captive ten tribes should be delivered by Judah and Benjamin and they would be altogether under the Messiah's rule.

Raf again explained how the sin of Lot's daughters had reference to the Messiah. Alkim proved by Scripture that the horns of the ram offered by Abraham in place of Isaac would be used — the larger one by the Messiah to summon the outcasts of Israel, and the smaller one by the Almighty Himself on Mount Sinai. Gamaliel, to finish up, showed how the ass which the Messiah would ride was the same ass ridden by Abraham when he went to offer Isaac, and by Moses when he came back to Egypt,—the

ass having been specially created on the eve of the first Sabbath.

In these discussions, Jesus and John, as being only disciples, took no part, only listening attentively; and Addi himself had been mainly silent. At length Gamaliel suggested that as they had come to the desert for the purpose of sitting at the feet of Addi, and learning of him, they should earnestly ask a more complete declaration of *his* views about the Messiah. Addi, thus solicited, addressed himself to his task.

He was sitting on a stone in the mouth of his cave and from this he did not arise. He flung off his mantle of fig leaves, leaving his body nearly naked, muttered a few unintelligible words of prayer or adjuration, and then raising his head and fixing his eyes in a trance-like stare, began: "I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh. There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel and shall smite the corners of Moab and destroy all the children of Sheth. This day is this prophecy fulfilled, for again the oracle declares,* 'When Rome once rules over Egypt, then will the greatest of the kingdoms, that of the Immortal King, appear among men, and a Holy Lord shall come, who will rule all countries of the earth through all ages, as time flows on.' One day (one thousand years) less two-thirds of an hour hath God allotted to the heathen, and then behold Messiah comes. His star has already appeared. He Himself is here to-day and on all days since His star appeared, waiting for Israel to repent.

"I see Sin as a Scarlet Woman, sitting on the mountain of Zion, and I see the Lord our Redeemer mourning and weeping among the rocks of the mountains and in the dark places of the earth. When Israel repents but one day, keeps but one Sabbath according to the Law, that day will He show Himself in glory and majesty!

* Sybiline.

And I see the mountains red with the blood of the heathen, and the robes of him who puts his foot on the necks of their kings dyed in their blood, like the skin of purple grapes. I see the beasts feeding on the flesh of the slain and the eagles and vultures sick with gorging.

“Then I see the Holy One standing on the roof of the Temple, and a light as of the sun at noonday going out from Him to the uttermost parts of the Earth; and I see the kings of Sheth and of Gog and Magog licking the dust from beneath His feet. And again I see,” and the old man, rising to his feet, erect, rigid, clothed to the waist with only his flowing white hair and beard, with both hands elevated, and gazing fixedly upwards with a wild gleam in his undimmed eyes, presented a living ideal of that ancient prophet of Horeb, the hope and expectation of whose coming was in every heart.

“And again I see the city of God, the new Jerusalem.” The old man paused again, while a spasm as of pain passed over his bronzed face and a tear slowly trickled down his cheek. “And the Temple, with its hundred towers of gold piercing the clouds. Sinai, Tabor, and Carmel are in the midst, and the riches of all the earth flow into it. Ten thousand thousand palaces arise in the twinkling of an eye, for the Angels build them. They cut rubies and sapphires and topaz and jacinth and emeralds and diamonds from the mountains like the stones of Tadmor. Of them they build its walls. Antioch, Damascus, and Babylon are within its walls and its gates are pearls. And there is no more drought nor famine nor pestilence. A stream flowing from the mountain of God waters the land, as did the Great River the Garden of Eden. The fruits also of Paradise are there, every tree bringing forth each day ripe fruit forever. The stalks of corn are as palm trees, and a single grape yields wine like a cask. There, by streams that never fail, among trees that never grow old and flowers that never

fade, the beloved of God, those who keep the Law, abide forever."

The rapt fervor and earnestness of Addi, joined with his accepted character of wise and holy man, made a deep impression on his hearers and he was listened to with breathless attention. Jesus and John at the close were sobbing audibly, and tears were streaming from the eyes of Raf and Alkim; and even the more stoical Gamaliel, whose real belief in an imminent Messiah was very cold and vague, felt himself lifted for a moment into the region of a glorious hope. When Addi concluded his rhapsody he withdrew into his cave and was seen no more.

XVII

DOUBT

"Thou speak'st to me of things which long have swum
In visions through my thought: I never could
Reconcile what I saw with what I heard."

—"CAIN," Act. 1, Scene 1.

At the grave of Shilath, as already intimated, Jesus and Esli had looked into each other's eyes and become acquainted. A mutual desire to meet had consequently arisen, and so at night we find them together with the other servants about the fire, where they had prepared the food for Gamaliel and Raf and Alkim.

While the learned and pious Rabbis were sleeping in self-satisfied assurance that theirs was the only true way and that they, above all others, were the beloved of God, these simple, struggling souls, in pain of doubt and inward questionings, were blindly groping, asking themselves and the Universe for the one true way.

Jesus had told them of Jacobus and the Zealots, of the bondwoman and of Shilath, and of the iniquities of Jerusalem and the Temple Priesthood. He did not speak in anger or bitterness, but more in sorrow, with earnest, measured words. No one made reply; and after a time Jesus resumed, "I came at last to the desert, to see if hermits like Addi or these Essenes had found a better way."

Jesus said no more and Esli answered: "Thou hast spoken well, O thou son of a believing woman! We of the unlearned also have thoughts. I, like thee, though of the dispersed among the Gentiles, was the son of a believing woman and was taught by her in all the knowledge of the Law and the Prophets. Then my father, looking upon a woman he thought fairer than my mother, gave her

a writing of divorcement, as is the law among the Jews, and my mother, a castaway, soon died of grief. I, a young lad, became a bond-servant of Mitra, who was a very rich man, and a Brahman. Mitra was quite young, little older than I, and I became his favorite.

“He had me instructed in all the knowledge of the Indians and in the Brahman religion. This religion of the Brahmans is very ancient and goes back, as the Brahmans believe, to the very beginning of the world, as with us Hebrews, and they have accounts of the Creation and of the Deluge much like ours. They have their Rabbis, who are held very holy and superior, as with us, and beneath them three lower grades who must not mingle or intermarry, and the lowest grade like our Amhaartz, despised and avoided, and whose touch or breath is pollution.

“They profess to believe in one Supreme God, and yet by a subtilty of reasoning I never could quite understand. Of their one God they make three, and call the three Trimurti, or three in one. The first they call Brahma the Creator, the second Vishnu the Preserver, and the third Siva the Destroyer. They seem to have originally believed in a common origin and brotherhood of all men, for they say that the spirit of Man is of the same substance and quality as that of the Godhead, emanating, as they say, from it, and if remaining or becoming pure and upright going back to its source at death. The souls of pure and pious men who have studied and fasted and prayed till they see as in a vision what they are and whither they go will be reabsorbed into the Godhead, to partake forevermore of His unspeakable Peace.

“Then they have their sacred books, as with us, and endless traditions. My master Mitra was of a very liberal mind, and though a Rabbi of the highest grade he often confessed to me that he had no doubt but the Brahman religion had been much changed and corrupted from what

it had been at the beginning; for he said that originally there had been no Trimurti, but one God only. And at last he began to listen to the preaching of a sect called Buddhists, who were reformers of the old religion and called men to go back to the simplicity and purity of the olden time. As I have found since, nearly all of the people of India were already Buddhists, and their doctrines are spread over all the countries of the East and North also, among the inhabitants of Gog and Magog, and to a country they call Zipango, and to the shores of the farthest sea. Their missionaries have gone into every land under the whole heaven, to Egypt and Rome, and in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees here in the land of Israel and at Jerusalem.

“My master Mitra was at last changed and converted, and sold all that he had and gave to the poor, and liberated his slaves, for with the Buddhists it is unlawful to hold slaves; and then to crown all he put on the beggar’s rags and went forth alone over the icy mountains of the north to carry the new doctrine to hyperborean savages, I know not where.”

Esli paused, and one of the other servants stirred the fire and put on fresh fuel. It was not cold but the air was damp in the deep valley, and jackals were abroad. The moon, too, had risen above the bare white cliffs and shone upon the white and purple and gold of the Rabbi’s tents and sent forth scintillating flashes from the gilding and ornaments of their equipage.

No one made reply to Esli, and presently he resumed. “Since I came here and have heard about these hermits and Essenes, like Shilath and Addi, the thought has come to me that perhaps these Buddhist missionaries I have spoken of may have had something to do with their peculiar ways and doctrines. The holy men among the Buddhists take upon themselves the vow of poverty. They dress in rags, beg their food, and sleep under the trees in the forests.

They preach, first of all, one only God and the abolition of all blood sacrifices. They kill no thing at all. They eat no flesh, they drink no wine. They have neither wives nor children. They go about doing good, ministering to others,—not being ministered to. My master Mitra gave as the chief reason for his change of faith that these Buddhist beggars had changed, as he said, the whole of India from being a land of war and bloodshed, of poverty and wretchedness, governed in cruelty and ignorance, to the most prosperous and happy land that the sun ever shown upon; and I believe he was right. India to-day is a paradise. I have traveled much, not only in India, but in many lands, and I know whereof I speak.

“Rome never laid her blighting hand upon India, and if she had she could not have changed the character of her people, nor the foundations upon which their happiness rests. They are happy and prosperous because, as my master Mitra taught, they are a nation truly of brothers and love one another. Listen to the precepts that are taught by every Buddhist mother, the first words spoken by infant lips: ‘By love alone can we conquer wrath.’ ‘By good alone can we conquer evil.’ ‘Say no harsh words to thy neighbor; he will reply to thee in the same tone.’ ‘That which can cause hate to cease in the world is not hate, but the absence of hate.’ ‘If, like a trumpet trodden on in battle, thou complainest not, thou hast attained perfection.’ ‘Silently shall I endure abuse, as the war elephant receives the shaft of the bowman.’ ‘The awakened man goes not on revenge, but rewards with kindness the very being who has injured him, as the sandal tree scents the axe of the woodman who fells it.’ ‘Do to others what you would have them do to you.’ ‘Conquer your foe by force, you increase his enmity; conquer by love, and you will reap no after sorrow.’

“Think of a Great People striving to live by such precepts. You may ask me who it was that began to teach

after this way, and when. I will tell you the story as I heard it from the venerable man who told it to Mitra. Very many years ago there lived in India a great king, whose wealth and power were the fear and wonder of the world. This king had one only son, whom he loved beyond all else and upon whom he bestowed every earthly good. And so careful was he that his son should not see or hear, or know anything to mar or cast a shadow on his happiness that he surrounded him with guards and high walls, and used every precaution so that no person or thing that was old or sick or sorrowful or in any way burdened should be so much as heard of by him. And he made for him palaces such as never before were seen, palaces for summer and others for winter and still others for spring and for fall, and he placed them in the midst of gardens that for extent were like provinces, and for beauty were like Paradise.

“There, amid lakes and streams and waterfalls were kept every bird, beast, flower, and fruit that grows in all the world. The air was heavy with the scent of orange, jasmine, and tuberose. In his palaces at command were poets, musicians, players, and dancing women to amuse his idle hours, with music to lull him to sleep. Added to all, he had a young wife who loved him as her own soul, and whom he loved as well.

“And so the prince’s days passed in blissful oblivion of all suffering of whatever kind. Of labor and toil, of hunger and nakedness, or even of death, he knew nothing. But after a time the prince grew tired of such a life of dreamy ease and slothfulness, and by some means he escaped from his splendid prison and went out into the world. There he saw that to minister to his luxury thousands must toil in hopeless penury, that pain and labor, hunger and nakedness, disease and death were the common lot of man.

“Siddhartha, for that was the prince’s name, went back

to his palaces and gardens a changed man. He was yet young, but the pleasures of youth no more gave him delight. From music and song and dancing women he turned away. The riches and splendor of his palaces and gardens were in his thoughts like a crushing burden, a due but unpaid debt. Ease and luxury were hateful to him. Even in the arms of his most loved wife he found no respite. The burden of the world's misery, of the world's wrongs weighed upon him like a prophet's vision. Everywhere, at all times, as the voice of one calling, calling, he heard the summons to come away. It was the Bath Quol, and he obeyed it. Putting on the yellow mantle of the beggar, with only his bowl and staff he left all and went forth into the world, no longer to be ministered unto, but to minister to whomsoever was in need. From a Prince and a Brahman of the highest class he became a Pariah, below all classes, a vermin that any one might kill; and he taught a new doctrine, new in this world,—the doctrine of peace and brotherly love. He taught that all men were brothers; that we must love all and hate none; that we should not resist evil, but for evil return good, and think it honor to serve and dishonor to be served."

Esli ceased, and there was silence for a long time. Jesus, sitting on a rock where the fire light shone full upon his face, had kept his eyes upon Esli with a trance-like fixedness that disturbed Esli, and brought his discourse to an abrupt close. In the silence that followed, Jesus stooped and began as if writing with his finger in the sand. At last straightening himself and looking earnestly at Esli, he asked, "Art thou to-day a Jew or a follower of that prophet?"

Esli was troubled, and the other servants looked inquiringly from Jesus to Esli and from Esli to Jesus, while the fox, sitting between Jesus' feet, looked up in his face and whined. Finally Esli answered with becoming dignity. "As I said, I am the son of a believing woman.

What a man sucks in at his mother's breast and learns at her knee he cannot forget. A son of Abraham never forgets. You ask me if I am a Jew or a follower of Buddha. I will answer you this when you tell me: Are these Essenes, Chitsonim as you call them,—are they Jews or are they heathen, Buddhists, or what?"

Esli paused for a reply. As Jesus did not answer, Esli went on. "I learned from Shilath when he was with us that the Essenes not only profess to be strict Jews and followers of Moses, but they claim to have separated themselves and live apart for the express purpose of more strictly obeying the Law of Moses, and because in the world at large they found it impossible to do so. They have so high a regard for Moses that the greatest crime known to them is to blaspheme the name of Moses, and instant death is the penalty. They send gifts to the Temple at Jerusalem and keep the Sabbath with a strictness beyond that of the Pharisees, and yet with all this, like the Buddhists, they abominate blood sacrifices. They refuse to kill. They declare against all war, and resist not evil. They believe in a common brotherhood and in common property. They despise riches and exalt poverty. Their rulers are elected by vote and are sworn to have no dress, no goods, no ornament or token, nothing to distinguish them from the man of lowest degree. They drink neither wine nor strong drink, and eat no flesh. They are sworn to honor God and speak truth and to deal justly and give freely. In all this they act and speak as Buddhists, and yet they are professed followers of Moses. They study the books of Moses' Law till they are familiar beyond thought with their contents, and yet they profess to find in them, and in them only, the sole authority for belief and practice so contrary. And so I ask again, are the Essenes Jews or heathen? And if you shall say they are Jews, with heathen practices, as were

our fathers of old, then I ask wherein are they Jews and wherein heathen?"

Jesus had stooped and was writing again with his finger in the sand. The last flickering tongue of flame had gone out in the fire, and the moon, high overhead, cast formless shadows. From a tent not far away a fearful Rabbi, awakened by a bad dream, was chanting an exorcism against evil spirits, and at the sound the two other servants got up and, baring their heads, uttered similar incantations to the moon. Jesus ceased writing and raised himself up. He saw and heard. Then he got up on his feet, and without speaking and followed by the fox, moved slowly away towards the desert.

After he had gone a little way, a muffled figure, not before perceived, moved out from the shadow of the rocks and followed Jesus at a distance. The men watched the two as they gradually disappeared from view on the desert sands.

XVIII

THE RETURN

"The severe Pharisaic, if not Essene piety of his house, as exhibited to us in James, the brother of the Lord."—KELM.

We are again at Nazareth. Jesus is at home, and to honor him and rejoice in his return, Jesus' brother James and Father Sadduc have been invited to supper. Jude also is still there. The table is spread in the same little garden, under the fig tree, where Jesus took leave of them a long time ago. Mary, the mother, has scarcely changed. She is the same busy, careful, sweet-faced matron of uncertain age that we have always known her, while Doris, with restored health, has blossomed into a full lived woman, in every way lovely and attractive.

Jesus has been at home two days,—long enough to look around and observe many things. There have been no complaints, and Jesus has not asked questions; but he has noted that neither his father's Teraphim nor his mother's circlet of coins has been redeemed, nor indeed any of the precious family treasures taken by Shunam; that his Mother and Doris wear the same garments, now much patched and worn, that they had when he went away; and that the little garden is sadly grown up with weeds and briars. Indeed the fox has found the place so much to the liking of his wild nature that he has dug for himself a hole under the wall in a neglected corner and taken up his abode there. Afterwards Jesus learned through Father Sadduc and others that Jude had neglected his mother and sister and his work, spending most of his time in secret missionary employments for the Zealots.

Jesus' first appearance at home, thin, dusty, and way-worn, had given a sense of sorrow and sadness. This

cloud, however, had been dispelled by Jesus' cheerful words and ready helpfulness and smiles and even laughter had taken the place of gloom. No one dared question Jesus of his long sojourn away, and the subject had not been mentioned. Jude, through his cousin and fellow-Zealot Simon, had learned of Jesus' short stay with Jacobus, but with characteristic prudence he had imparted nothing to mother or sister, and they all knew by common report that Mary of Magdala was still with Honorius in Tiberias.

But if Jesus had been silent about himself, and his mother and sister had made no complaints of neglect or unkindness, Jesus had been informed about many things that had given him disturbing thoughts. With fast falling tears, the mother had informed him that a "Chitsonim House" had been established in Nazareth, that James was showing a strong inclination towards joining the "Chitsonim," and that Jude's irregular, wild life, was a great trial to her. She began to show an aversion even to the Zealots, and expressed sorrow that her husband Joseph or her father Joazer or any of their kin had ever given encouragement to such wild notions.

The supper was frugal, even to parsimony. Barley bread with salt fish, onions, and olives prepared in various ways made up the repast. Jesus noticed that there was no meat, no wine, no fig conserves, as in former times; but no one appeared to notice, and indeed, with the exception of wine, the fare was that common to all laboring people in Palestine. After supper, at Jesus' request, Doris brought out an old harp that had been in the family of Joseph time out of mind. It had been hid away as a last and most precious relic of happier times, to save it from the remorseless clutch of the taxgatherer; and with strings broken, dusty, and out of tune, it was a sad reminder of their fallen state. But Jesus deftly put it in order, and then they all joined in singing the old

familiar Psalms that mothers in Israel had taught their children in every household since the time of Ezra. Even James and Jude, who from bitterness of spirit had long since ceased to join in singing, were gradually softened by the old familiar strains, and after the first Psalm chimed in feebly and as if ashamed at first, but soon heartily and in full accord. Tears were soon in every eye, and Mary, at last overcome, cast herself on Jesus' breast and wept without restraint.

After the singing there followed a long silence, which began to grow embarrassing. It was expected that Jesus would tell something of his long absence; yet no one had the courage to ask him. Jesus himself appeared not to notice, but seemed absent and thoughtful. At length the good Rabbi Sadduc approached him guardedly; but his cautious advance was entirely superfluous, for when the subject was broached it was found that Jesus had no secret that he was unwilling to divulge. His absent thoughts had not been of himself and his trials, but what he had seen and heard at home was leading his thoughts away towards new Edens and vast Utopias for which he had yet no words.

As soon as he understood that some account of himself was expected he manifested no unwillingness. To the great disappointment of his mother and Doris, he did not mention his visit to Tiberias, but gave a full account of his sojourn with Jacobus and his band, and of his visit to John and Addi, and of the three Rabbis and Shilath. He told also of the Syrian bond-woman, and how he had found a home for her among the kinsmen of John at Hebron. He did not tell how she had pleaded on her knees to remain his slave and personal attendant, nor did he at first mention Esli and his story. When he ceased with the story of Shilath, all eyes were turned towards James, and Doris cried out, "There James! Doesn't that give you enough of the Chitsonim?" James flushed, and a hot answer was

on his lips, but remembering the Essene doctrine of kindness and soft words, he answered mildly: "Because the way of righteousness is sometimes hard, my sister, is no reason why a true man should shrink from it. Shilath to-day is sitting on the right hand of God in glory and angels wait upon him." The Rabbi Sadduc shook his head doubtfully but he did not speak.

Jesus, with some hesitation and apparent misgivings, then told of Esli, and repeated word for word all that he had said. It had grown too dark for Jesus to see the faces of his auditors, but he knew that they were listening with rapt attention. His mother came and stood by his side and rested a trembling hand on his shoulder, but she did not speak.

After a long silence Sadduc spoke and said, "Yes, I have heard of something of this sort before. The caravans from the East often have with them men of the kind you tell of, and their doctrines are taught in Rome and Alexandria. Their professions and practices seem indeed to be just and right; but it is impossible that they should *be* right. They cannot be sent of God. The whole world is without doubt to be redeemed and every thing put to rights in due time, but God has appointed one only means to do it. His chosen people, when reigned over by the Messiah, will do it, as promised by God Himself, and no other can. As is said, 'The heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing.'"

"Praised be God," broke in Mary, fervently. "Thou art still a true Rabbi, and speakest of this thing the words of truth and soberness. In these days, when so many are drawn away after strange gods, and heathen practices, when these cunning Chitsonim are creeping into every city and have set up a house here in Nazareth at our very doors, it is time for every faithful Israelite to speak out and cry aloud, lest we fall upon as evil times as those of Ahab and Jezebel."

“One would think that Mother had been to school to Shammai,” remarked James, gravely. “She should proclaim herself a Pharisee.”

“Well, now, I don’t know,” put in Sadduc. “We should all be Pharisees in doctrine! And I am told that all the zealous, goodly women of Jerusalem *are* Pharisees.”

XIX

FALLING OFF

"An Idea, when it fills and elevates a man's mind, shuts it up against love, and crowds out persons."—JEAN PAUL.

For a year or more after his last return to Nazareth, Jesus remained with his mother and worked at his trade. Jude at once took the occasion to go off with his cousin Simon on a proselyting tour for the Zealots, and James, leaving wife and children, disappeared for a long period, without giving any account of himself. His wife declared that he was with the "vile Chitsonim," and her view of the case was most generally accepted in Nazareth. James' mother and sister were scarcely less condemnatory of the Chitsonim and of James' defection, but Jesus, though having now the double task of taking care of James' family as well as his own, uttered no word of complaint or censure, but excused and mollified.

Skillful and active as he was known to be at his trade, he found steady employment, and soon the little house of his fathers, so long neglected and going to poverty, was restored to a degree of comfort and abundance. The garden was made clean and beautiful, and even the old Tera-phim and his mother's headdress of coins were redeemed.

In being thus a dutiful son and brother, Jesus was much commended by the friends and neighbors of Mary in Nazareth, and Mary herself never tired of giving instances of Jesus' filial and brotherly love; and yet beneath it all, in the heart of Mary a vague sense of fear and disappointment gave her many an hour of gloom and unrest. She noticed with pain that in many things Jesus was neglectful of those usages and customs which, though not laid down by Moses, had by ages of observance acquired

all the force of Law. He was not particular about the washing of hands and often forgot to put on his phylacteries in time of prayer; and in his prayers, so far from following the set forms of the synagogue, he often introduced ideas and expressions of his own, to the great pain and confusion of his mother and Doris.

Then on Sabbath days, instead of attending at the synagogue service, he would often wander away to the hills, where he had tended sheep as a boy, and spend the whole day in solitude. The hope and ambition of his mother that he would become a Rabbi and gain a name and place for himself in the world she found it very hard to give up. With his well-known knowledge of the Law, his manly beauty, and his charm of manner, it had been believed by many besides his mother and sister that he would in due time take his proper place among the great and honored Doctors of the Law in Jerusalem. Whenever he appeared at the synagogue on Sabbath, he was expected to read and expound the appointed texts for the day. Jesus' rendering, though generally approved by the common people, who were the mass of his hearers, was usually received with black looks and whispered maledictions by the rich rulers and Pharisees.

The democratic nature and spirit of the synagogue finds no better illustration than in this, that the preacher in the midst of his discourse was often interrupted, questioned, corrected, and even contradicted by any of his hearers who felt qualified to do so; and on one occasion Jesus' exposition of the text, Deuteronomy x, 18, 19, brought out such a storm of discussion that it ended at last with flying stones and brickbats, with many a bruise and broken head. Thereafter Jesus excused himself from officiating on such occasions, and more and more absented himself from synagogue services.

All this to Mary and Doris was a source of great sorrow and perplexity, the more so because the faithful at

Nazareth, were, even more than elsewhere, surrounded by heathen influences, and the true Israelites there were but as a mere handful compared with the whole. There was but one synagogue for a population of several thousand, and the mass of the people, then as now, resorted for worship more to shrines on hill tops and in groves than to temples or synagogues.

Then, too, Nazareth was a meeting place of the highways of the nations. Three great caravan roads, one from Damascus and the distant East, and the great Roman Road from Syria, crossed and passed each other at or near Nazareth; and often at night, when a great caravan was camped in the plain below, its streets and wine shops and houses of low resort were thronged with a motley multitude of Arab and Persian and Hindoo camel-drivers, donkey-boys, jugglers, and peddlers who sold charms, amulets, and Teraphim. But besides these, with the caravans were merchants of wealth and learned men of distinction from every nation. The plain below the Nazareth hills was a favorite camping ground for caravans; and the Rabbi Sadduc, as before noted, often found among them brother Rabbis and other learned men, with whom conversation was both interesting and profitable.

The conquests of Alexander had scattered not only the Greek language throughout the East, but Greek philosophy, literature, and religion were in vogue in all countries, not excepting even Palestine. Although the study of Greek was discouraged by the Rabbis, their precepts were nullified by their example, and there were few Rabbis of Jesus' time who could not converse in the language of Plato and Thucydides. Moreover, as shown in the Gospel account, there were at this time considerable numbers of Greek proselytes. They were mostly from beyond the Euphrates, where they had come in contact with a Jewish propaganda more astute, aggressive, and unscrupulous than even that of Judea and Jerusalem.

Jesus, being at this time a sort of protégé of the venerable Rabbi Sadduc, usually went with him when at night he visited the caravans, and listened to the talk of the older men in silent but intense receptivity. In this way Jesus became acquainted with the character and some of the sayings of Socrates, and more vaguely and by more remote hearsay of the life and doctrines of Zoroaster and Confucius. Yet in all this Jesus did not cease to be a Jew. He failed not to go with his mother and Doris to the yearly Passover Feast at Jerusalem, and with Sadduc for instructor continued absorbing all that enormous mass of oral tradition which afterwards in written form became the huge tomes of the Talmud. The Rabbi Sadduc made glad the heart of Jesus' mother by assurances that her son would surely in time be worthy to sit beside the Great Hillel or Shammai in Jerusalem.

Moreover, as time passed on, Jesus became to all outward appearance more and more devoted to his mother and sister. It was noticed that he did not marry, and many a mother in Israel with marriagable daughters felt herself aggrieved by Jesus' apparent insensibility. His noble bearing and appearance and, far more, his conceded qualifications as a Rabbi were attractions that were felt not only in Nazareth but also in Cana and Capernaum, where Jesus was known. To be the wife of a Rabbi was the highest honor to which a woman in Israel could aspire. A Rabbi was more honored than a priest, even than the High Priest, and the wealthiest families in Israel were glad to give their daughters to a Rabbi in marriage, even though he might be very poor. Jesus' mother and sister were not blind to these conditions; if they were disposed to be, their neighbors and acquaintances made it impossible.

Father Joazer and Uncles Zebedee and Clopas were ever ready with words of praise for the exemplary and promising son. Mary received all these kind words with assurances of thankfulness and appreciation, and she added

to them innumerable instances of Jesus' good deserving,—his kindness to everyone, his temperance, frugality, and industry. She told how he refused wine and meats and lived almost like a Nazarite, how in leisure hours he had improved and embellished the house and garden, and she showed with pride numberless little household conveniences which he had contrived and made, and, above all, the beautiful arbor that he had built under the great fig tree.

To her hearers it would seem that Mary and Doris were perfectly content and that there was nothing lacking. And yet in the heart of Mary there were many secret and painful misgivings that she dared not express. Her ancestors, in an unbroken line for hundreds of years, had lived in strict observance of the Law. Her woman's heart was bound to it by all the tender reminiscences of the past, and by all her hopes and aspirations for the future. To disregard the Law was a sin almost unthinkable. It was the "horror of great darkness."

As already indicated, Jesus had shown from the time he came home from Tiberias what seemed to his mother a shocking laxity in this regard, and now, after his visit to Jacobus and with John and Addi in the wilderness, he appeared even more regardless. She had ventured on several occasions to hint delicately to him her anxiety and disapproval; at the first he had tried to excuse and explain and even promised to be more observant: but at the last he had come to listen silently to her reproofs, and to gaze upon her with an air so sad and abstracted that she no longer had the heart to reprove him.

But to the good Rabbi Sadduc she poured out her complaints with less reserve. She told him how Jesus had begun by discarding the set prayers in a measure, and substituting words and phrases of his own. This, she said, had continued till now he frequently omitted the eighteen Benedictions, and at meat blessed and gave thanks in his own words. She admitted, in answer to Sadduc's

questioning, that Jesus was still much given to prayer, but it was secret and unheard. She had frequently known him to spend half the night on his knees in the little arbor in the garden; and once she had found him there in the morning, sitting with fixed, open eyes as if in a trance. About hand washing she reluctantly expressed the fear that Jesus no longer even *tried* to pour the water as prescribed, but, as it appeared, washed only to cleanse himself from dust and sweat, like any ordinary heathen. Then the fifty-nine feast days of the Jewish year, with the many fasts and observances,—Mary feared that Jesus was growing too lax towards them, and she told Sadduc what Jesus said about them,—that they took two whole months out of every year in which no work could be done, and this, with the many daily prayers, journeys to Jerusalem, tithes, Roman taxes, and Temple sacrifices, made it impossible for a common man who had to support a family by labor to comply with all and live.

The good Rabbi, who had himself observed a sad falling off in Jesus of late, comforted the tearful mother all he could. He reminded her that though the great mass of Israelites were only vile Amhaartz very lax in observance of the Law, they were all the children of promise, and under such changed conditions as would obtain under the beneficent rule of the Messiah all would be restored. He spoke of the well-known instance of the great Rabbi Simeon ben Lackish, who had been a robber in early life. Knowledge of the Law, he said, was the main thing, and Jesus in that, considering his youth, was beyond compare. Mary was comforted, but far from satisfied. There was still the lurking fear; and she had not dared to tell all,—not even the worst, for she feared that Sadduc would be angry and bring Jesus before the council, and her heart failed her. And so she did not tell Sadduc about the phylacteries that Jesus seemed loath to put on, and the beautiful new tallith, with the heavy fringes of blue and

white, which she had made for him, fit for any Rabbi, but which he seemed to value little and to put on only with obvious reluctance.

She also failed to tell the Rabbi about Jesus' disregard of the Sabbath, which she felt was worst of all; for he often went away alone into the hills, far beyond the limits of a Sabbath day's journey, and even on such occasions wore wooden sandals and carried things in his pockets, both of which acts were unlawful. On the Sabbath, too, she had seen him pull tares in the garden and tie up a wandering branch of climbing vine over the arbor; and only last Sabbath a Canaanitish child had been run over and nearly killed near their house by a Roman chariot, and Jesus had bound up its broken limbs and carried the child home to its mother,—all of which were unlawful to do on the Sabbath day. And to tell the Rabbi of them was to be Jesus' accuser in matters too serious for a loving mother.

And so Mary, in tears and not much comforted, let the Rabbi go away without telling all.

XX

THE CHARIOT RACE

"The most beautiful things in the world are done in a state of fever: every great creation involves a breach of equilibrium."—
RENAN.

Our story moves forward two years. It is the birthday of Herod Antipas, and as usual he is making it the occasion for a grand fête at his favorite capital, Tiberias. At the great Temples the gods and goddesses have received the usual honors of processions, sacrifices, and libations, and the rulers of the synagogue have been given by Antipas a gift of one hundred oxen and five hundred sheep to be sent as a Temple offering to Jerusalem. This gift of Antipas is significant of many things. Perhaps first of all it is in imitation of Cæsar's daily gift of an ox and two lambs for sacrifice to the Temple at Jerusalem. Then it is a peace offering to the Jewish nation; and last but not least, heathen as he is at heart, Antipas would propitiate the god of the Hebrews, just as he does the gods of the Romans and Syrians.

Antipas, as a circumcised Jew, defends his patronage of heathen gods by the plea that of all the kings Israel ever had all but two were forced to do the same. Even Solomon, he says, found it necessary to sacrifice to Ashtaroath and Milcom and Chemosh and Molech. Still further against Jewish objection Antipas urged that more than half of his subjects were non-Jewish and under Roman law must be recognized. And so not only were the heathen Temples of Tiberias given over to impure rites and beastly orgies, but for the common multitude a far greater attraction had been ordered and proclaimed in sports at the Amphitheater.

There were to be gladiatorial combats, fights with wild beasts, and, to crown all, a chariot race in imitation of Rome and Antioch,—but with the marked difference that instead of a man an Amazon, young and beautiful, would drive the black Numidian coursers of Honorius. The great show has been advertised for weeks beforehand throughout Galilee and Judea and also in the free cities of Decapolis and in the dominions of Philip, Antipas' brother; and the numbers gathered to witness it are greater even than anticipated.

Not only Greeks, Romans, Syrians, Phœnicians, Canaanites, and Arabs, but Jews in considerable numbers are present. Many of the lowest class (Amahaartz), regardless of Levitical uncleanness, mingle boldly with the heathen crowds, and others, a few, though partaking and sharing in these forbidden and accursed things, separate themselves in supercilious pride and stand aloof.

We will not pause here to describe in detail the "sports" of the day: it is enough to say that while they have been to the simple, untraveled denizens of the country most wonderful and even amazing, to those who, like Sanballat and Hippo, Eugenius and their set, had seen the wonders of Rome and witnessed the shows and triumphs there, this display at Tiberias was a very mild affair. Indeed, those of Antipas' personal friends who were complaisant enough to honor it with their presence professed to be bored, and evinced their superior knowledge and taste by jeers and unfavorable comparisons with Rome and Antioch.

There was one thing in the program, however, which even to these sated pleasure-seekers held out something of promise for a brief glow of exciting novelty. The chariot race of itself was a bold innovation of the elder Herod; and now to give it the additional *éclat* of an Amazon charioteer was to elevate the sport far above the level of the common hippodrome, and create a sensation that Romans themselves might share. This race was held for the

last, and the sun was but a hand's breadth above the Nazareth hills when a stentorian herald, after first blowing a trumpet, announced that the race was about to begin.

There are still some preliminaries to be executed, and while the dead bodies of men and beasts alike are being dragged from the arena by troops of slaves, the pools of blood covered with fresh sand, and the goal and barriers put up, we may pass freely among the spectators and hear what they have to say about the show.

In the royal Podium, where the seats are luxuriously upholstered and adorned, we find the same company, with some additions, that we saw at the banquet of Honorius. Besides Eugenius, Hippo, Nicias, with Galla, Glaphyra, Lamia, and the rest, there are now the proud and haughty Herodias and her beautiful daughter Salome. There is Zosimus, the Roman centurion from Capernaum, Sanballat from Damascus, and the Rabbi Boethus from Jerusalem, and Varus the Roman Captain we have seen at the cave of Og.

All these are the guests of Antipas, and sit with him in the Podium. To Honorius, as the originator and patron of the Amazonian exhibition, conversation is now mainly directed. Antipas himself has graciously complimented him by calling attention to the plain indications that the appearance of the Amazon is looked for with greater interest than has been shown for any other part of the show. "If your Amazon performs her part with credit," he concluded, "I fear you will get an order from Sejanus to produce her at Rome."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Macro. "Have no fear of that, Honorius! Unless your Amazon has something to commend her more than driving a team of lazy, pampered horses, she will not excite much envy in Rome. They have plenty of material of that kind to work up into Amazons or any thing else they like."

"You talk as if you thought Honorius' Amazon were

not the real thing!" cried Nicias. "How is that, Honorius? Come, tell us about her! Where did you get her?"

"Oh, where did I get her? That is my secret. Wait till you see her on the race-course, and if you don't say she is a worthy descendant of Hippolytê, then you may question; but for now, wait: I say, wait."

"Oh, we will wait, of course," answered Nicias, "but only think how much keener an edge our interest would take at once if we knew that your heroine was captured with arms in her hands in the wilds of Scythia or Sarmatia."

There was a tone of banter in the remarks of both Macro and Nicias, and Honorius was nettled by it. "You and Macro," he said, "speak as if a real Amazon were out of the question, as if there were no such thing."

"Oh, did we? Then I, for my part, beg your pardon, and will frankly explain. I have no doubt that Amazons are plentiful enough in their own country, but like Griffins and Chimæras they are hard to get, and seem almost never to have been brought under bond. Isn't that your idea, Macro?"

"Well, I suppose so," answered Macro, rather dubiously. "I never myself had much of an opinion of any of those creatures you mention, but I suppose I am constitutionally an agnostic. In these days a man can scarcely believe anything he doesn't himself see, and not always even that; though in this matter of the Amazons I must admit that the evidence is strong enough. Julius Cæsar was thought to be a man of sense, and he, disbelieving almost everything else, even the gods and immortality, believed in the Amazons; and all our wise men, both Greek and Roman, hold the same opinion. Not to speak of old Homer, who seemed to know all about them, we have the authority of Herodotus, Plato, and Isocrates, of Pindar and Pausanius, for their existence. Yes, we are bound to believe that there are Amazons, just as we are bound to believe that

there are gods. The evidence is good enough, only no one seems able to bring forward the thing itself, either the god or the Amazon."

The fair Lamia, who had listened to this discussion with apparent interest, now with smiling deference broke in. "Begging your pardon for interrupting, it should be allowable for a woman to speak for women, and you men, whether Greek, Roman, or Hebrew, are all, I believe, as Macro says, Agnostic. You believe in nothing whatever. Why, your grave stones, and I see them everywhere, are records of your bald Atheism. I saw one yesterday here in Tiberias, such as I have seen in Italy and Attica, denying and criminating the gods and even cursing them for injustice and wrong-doing. You would believe in Amazons if you believed in anything, for the evidence, as Macro says, is perfect. Those of you who have been at Athens will remember the Amazonion, that beautiful monument commemorative of Theseus' defense of Athens itself against the Amazons; also the tomb of Antiope, their queen. And there are to-day, as I have seen myself, monuments of their victorious march on Athens scattered all through Greece, in Megara, Laconia, Bœotia, and in Thessaly. I remember too, when a child at home in Athens, of going with my mother to the yearly sacrifices to the Amazons at the festival of the Theseia."

"Oh, yes," cried Macro, "and Pompey had a lot of Amazons exhibited in his Triumph, and they were no doubt genuine, like Honorius' charioteer."

The smile which went around at this last sally of Macro's was shared by even the dignified Rabbi Boethus and Sanballat. Meanwhile, among the vast concourse of common people, though there may be here and there a doubting one, no skeptic whisper is heard. A slight and obscure knowledge of Grecian mythology had at this time penetrated to every part of the known world. Even the most rigid and exclusive Pharisee had not escaped some inocu-

lation of Grecian culture. St. Paul, himself, a few years later, used unconsciously Greek proverbs and expressions.

And so now the expectation aroused by Honorius' announcement of an Amazon charioteer has grown to assume monstrous proportions. Some of the crowd have pushed out on the race-course and a squad of Herod's soldiers on horseback are careering round the lists, forcing the people back with profuse curses and are not sparing of blows with the flat of their drawn swords.

Presently the blare of the trumpet and the voice of the Herald announce the appearance of the racing chariots. It is the first public exhibition of this sport that has been attempted in Palestine. Antipas, having witnessed these sports at Antioch and Rome, and being ambitious to keep step with the times, has induced Honorius and Hippo to bring out each a team, while he himself makes up a third. That elaborate system of betting already prevalent in the greater cities is absent here. It is said that a great prize is to be given the victor, but both Honorius and Hippo understand that the only prize is court-favor, and the exhibition is to be not so much of skill and speed as of Greek and Roman manners, and especially of the Amazon charioteer, who, of course, is predetermined to win.

The teams of Antipas and Hippo are the first to make their appearance and are driven slowly around the ring. There is display of polished steel and brass, gaudy colors, and tinsel of silver and gold; but the horses are quite ordinary. Those of Antipas, driven by a fierce-looking Arab, show points of blood and breeding; but they are far past their prime and look old and broken. While these teams jog slowly past and we begin to wonder about the Amazon, we hear a great shout in the direction of the entrance and with a thousand others hasten away, hoping to get a near view of the much-heralded prodigy. Armed soldiers are clearing the way with blows and curses; but the excited crowd pays little heed. Women, children, and

weak old men are trampled to death with no one to help or commiserate. Caught in the surging mass, we are borne this way and that till at last, clinging desperately to a marble baluster of the gallery, we are able to keep our place till the way is clear.

And now the great doors of the entrance are thrown wide, and the chariot of Honorius appears. The horses may well enough be called Numidian,—large, powerful creatures, black and shining as polished ebony, while at their heads on each side walks a stately Ethiopian groom. These grooms are also footmen, trained to run beside a chariot, as did Elijah by the chariot of Ahab. They are clothed only in breech-clouts, but have head-dresses of colored feathers and large rings in their ears. Their black bodies, anointed with oil, reflect the sun's last rays like the scales of a great serpent.

But neither these nor the chariot itself, blazing with color, with polish and gilding and brave equipment, receive any attention, rare as they all are in Palestine. It is the charioteer alone upon whom every eye is riveted. For a moment even the *blasé* occupants of the gilded Podium, Antipas and his friends, cease their elegant gossip and fix attentive eye on the unknown charioteer of Honorius. That she is truly a woman no one will question,—enough of her form is revealed by the bare arms and shoulders and the flowing Greek costume of an earlier time. From under a shining casque as of Pallas flows the dark mass of her unbound hair, and the face, strikingly noble and beautiful, is surely that of a woman. At her back she carries a Parthian bow and arrows. With her left hand she reins her horses with easy grace, and carries a long-lashed folded whip in her right.

As she enters the arena she turns her head and her dark eyes flash a quick, searching glance on the group in the Podium; but her countenance does not change, and but for this momentary yielding she seems as ignorant and uncon-

scious of her surroundings as if she were alone on her native Sarmatian plains. The effect is profound beyond expression: those effects, often artificial, which issue in applause, are here wholly wanting. The sound of the great throng, which up to this moment has been a constant roar as of distant breakers, is hushed to silence. There is not a whisper or a motion as this vision of beauty and of mystery moves forth with stately pomp into the arena. To the thousands of common people, ever eager for some new thing, delighting in mystery, and credulous beyond words, this is a real Amazon, and a wave of joyous expectancy runs through the crowd like an electric thrill. Even those traveled Pyrrhonists of the Podium are interested beyond their wont. Antipas leads in compliments to Honorius in which all join.

“This Amazon of yours is well gotten up, Honorius,” cries Macro. “She would do credit to you at Rome. Cæsar himself, I think, would deign to look upon her with favor. You must take her to Rome, Honorius.”

Meantime the race is being arranged, and the three teams, after slowly circling the arena once, are brought together at the starting line, and carefully trained as they have been in private race-courses, the start is made without trouble or confusion.

Once off, the human hive awakes again, and the sound of voices becomes a roar. Expectation stands tiptoe, waiting upon Hope. But disappointment begins at once to darken across the scene. Why is it that the horses do not run with any spirit, and the drivers, scarcely better than puppets, show no excitement? Why do they not shout and lay on the lash? The Ethiopian guards, running by the side of Honorius’ team, keep their places with ease, while the Amazon driver, calm and stately as a marble statue, stands unmoved, making no effort to increase the speed.

A feeling of disappointment steals like a chill wind from Lebanon through the crowd, and in the Podium Hon-

orius and Hippo have to submit to some keen raillery for the spiritless action of their teams. But the crowd as a whole is patient and forbearing. Unlike the Roman populace, pampered, petulant, and exacting in the last degree, this provincial gathering has no standard of excellence, and scarcely knows what to applaud or what to condemn. And besides, perhaps the real test and grand display is to come later,—at the very last. They will patiently wait. The small size of the arena requires five rounds to make the goal, and there is yet time for bursts of speed and brilliant horsemanship. And so, to the end of the third round, the people watch and wait. Then a whisper runs around that it is all a farce. Here and there in the crowd are men, Edomites, Zidonians, and Egyptians, who have seen Antioch and Ephesus and even Rome. They sneer openly at this spectacle and rehearse the glories of Rome. There begin to be murmurs.

The Amazon, now far in advance of the others, even reins in her steeds, and the Ethiopian footmen show no sign of weariness. Besides, it is known that Antipas' Arabians are famed for speed. Shouts begin to arise. "Give them the rein, brother, and let them go," yells a wild-eyed Ishmaelite at our side. He is ashamed to see steeds of the desert so beaten and waves his turban frantically. Then, as if speaking to himself, he adds, "Horses of that strain never before were beaten *so*. I knew their sire and dam. By the life of Ishmael, it is a shame!"

And now the wild cry of the Arab is taken up by others near, and soon a thousand voices are echoing his call, "Let them go!" "Put on the lash!" In the midst of this uproar, the Amazon, still holding up her team, has come around opposite where we stand. In her is no excitement visible and the calm majesty of her demeanor imposes silence.

But Heavens! What portent is this! At the moment,

a tall, sinewy figure, clothed only with a skin girt about the loins and a great shock of black hair falling to his girdle, starts out from the crowd and with incredible swiftness runs in before the horses of the Amazon, throwing up his arms and yelling like a demon. It is an apparition to frighten the dumbest day drudge on the streets, and the horses of Honorius, rearing and plunging, turn and rush away mad with fear.

For an instant there is a silence as of death, every tongue is stilled as if petrified; and in the hush the cry of the wild Nazarite rings and resounds in the farthest corner of the Amphitheater. "No king but God; no tax but to the Temple; no friend but a Zealot." While he is yet speaking, a downward stroke from the sword of a giant Gaul who comes riding furiously up cleaves the Nazarite to the chine. But no one notes or cares, and slaves drag the body away.

All eyes are following the chariot of the Amazon. From the instant of fright it was manifest that she was master of herself, if not of her horses. Almost thrown from the chariot by the sudden turn, she recovered herself with wonderful agility, and now, erect, rigid, with a glow on her cheeks and a wild, dancing light in her eyes, she reins in and guides her frantic team as if she were born to it, a true Amazon of the steppes.

Barely avoiding a collision with the chariot of Antipas, the next danger is at the short turn at the farther end of the course. Though the Amazon skillfully takes the broadest circuit, the chariot slides and tilts, and through the dust-cloud we see only the plumed crest of its rider, the one wheel whirling long in air, and then, emerging, on again they come straight for the goal.

A shout of applause goes up, like that of a conquering host; surely the horses will tire and the Amazon will gain control. But again something has happened. The reins,

tampered with by some zealous Israelite in the household of Honorius, have parted in the hands of the Amazon, leaving her helpless.

A shudder runs through the crowd. Nothing now can save her? But yes! Again the figure of a man darts out from the crowd and strives to grasp the horses' heads. Alas, too late! Yet no! Barely missing the bridle rein, he turns like lightning and, incredible as it seems, grasps the spokes of the chariot wheel. There is a grinding side movement of the chariot, a cloud of dust, a crash, and then away the wild black horses fly, leaving the broken chariot, with the Amazon, *safe!* As she steps out from the wreck her eyes meet those of her deliverer, and so they stand for a moment, looking steadfastly upon each other. Neither of them speaks, and the Jew does not offer any further assistance to the Amazon. They simply stand and gaze.

Meantime guards, soldiers, and citizens come running up, among them Varus the Roman. He also gazes upon the Jew in evident amazement. The people, too, are astonished and silent. What does it all mean? A crowd gathers, and in the press the Jew who has rescued the Amazon slips away and disappears.

An hour later and the word has passed from mouth to mouth and is carried away to be scattered abroad over the land that a great sorcerer has appeared in the Amphitheater of Tiberias and rescued the Amazon by a miracle.

XXI

THE LAST APPEAL

“With consistency a Great Soul has simply nothing to do.”—
EMERSON.

Towards midnight of the day of the chariot-race we may find Jesus again with Margaloth in the steward's room in the palace of Honorius. Jesus is speaking: “It is as you say; I know it may appear that I come to demand pay for having saved her life: and yet I feel sure that Mary in her right mind will know better. I came to Tiberias for the sole purpose of seeing with my own eyes what Mary is and to make one last appeal to her to flee away, and now the accident of having been instrumental in saving her life should not deter me from carrying out my original design. I must see her if it is at all possible, and you surely will not refuse to convey word to her that I am here.”

Margaloth, like all other sincere men and women who had any conversation with Jesus, had fallen under the spell of his personality and was glad to serve him; and yet he hesitated. He had already given many reasons to dissuade Jesus from seeing Mary, but the real reason he had not yet given. It was painful to him; and to Jesus, he knew it would be agony.

But the truth must be known at last, he thought, and Jesus might better know it now than later; and so he said, “My brother, I have striven to dissuade you with excuses, but it is better for you to know the truth. Mary is not what she was, not what she is in your thoughts. She is no longer an unwilling bondwoman, but is now openly and vauntingly the willing mistress of Honorius and in a few days she goes with him gladly to Rome. While we speak,

she is in the Banquet Hall with Honorius and his friends, listening to their flatteries and with heathen and harlots growing drunk with wine. Forget her, I beseech you, and cast her out of your thoughts forever. She, and her mother more than she, has brought shame on the name of Israel, and let her be accursed!"

The eyes of Margaloth fell before the calm, rebuking gaze of Jesus, whose sad, pallid face showed no change.

"Thou sayest ill, my brother Margaloth," answered Jesus. "I was not unprepared for this. I felt when I saw it was she on the chariot of Honorius that this you say was true; but we must not forget that she is still our sister and of the best blood in Israel. She is but a lost lamb, strayed away among the dens of wild beasts; we must not give her up or forsake her."

"It is very noble of you to think and feel so," answered Margaloth. "It seems impossible that anyone should. I don't understand it. Most men in your circumstances would seek rather to kill than to save."

"Yes, and men trust to find excuse for their hardness of heart and even their crimes in the law of Moses. They forget that Moses commanded, 'Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. I am the Lord.'"

Margaloth shrugged his shoulders and shook his head, but did not answer. But the fact that Mary was in the Banquet Hall with Honorius and his friends precluded all thought of a meeting with her at this time, and Jesus went away with the understanding that he should come again on the night following.

Even this arrangement was acceded to by Margaloth with evident fear and reluctance; but he found it impossible to resist the calm persistence of Jesus, and, moreover, he had reason to hope that the debaucheries of the present night would send Honorius into retirement for a day or two at least, and that there would be less danger

in the attempt of Jesus to see Mary than on other occasions.

And so again at midnight of the next day Jesus is in the same private apartment of Mary, where we saw him with her, a long time ago. He is still dressed in the simple garb of a peasant, but with hair and beard like a Nazarite, unshorn and descending in wavy, shining masses about his shoulders and on his breast. And spite of all his cares and troubles he is still beautiful, and in a way even youthful. At first sight and at a distance we would say, "What a beautiful and well grown youth." Near at hand and hearing him speak, we would say, "What a dignified, self-contained, and masterful *man*."

There are no marks of care or sorrow or of study on his clear, peaceful face: it is as serene as a summer sky. Only when we look into the large, liquid, luminous eyes (eyes like a woman's) do we see the depths of sadness. His nature is so broad and deep, so exquisitely attuned, that all simple, sincere souls, men, women, and children, find in him the companionship their souls seek, and most of all things desire, the complement of themselves.

While Jesus is waiting for Mary to come, his eyes wander over the room, marking with sad foreboding the fresh evidences of pride and luxury that are everywhere conspicuous. He remembers perfectly how the room was furnished when he was last there, and knows that it has been furnished anew throughout and more richly. India, Tyre, Egypt, and Greece have contributed from their choicest treasures to make of this darkened chamber a seraglio fit for an Olympian. Hanging lamps are so placed as to bring into clear relief paintings and statuary that would bring a blush to the cheek of any but the most hardened; to Jesus they seem like horrible blasphemy and are the final word in the indictment.

It is too true, as Margaloth says, there is little hope. Turning away from these abominations, Jesus' eyes run

over the rich divans and the tufted floor, littered and strewn with airy fancies,— things of vertu that a queen might envy. Musical instruments of many strange designs, harps inlaid with gold and pearl and precious gems, tabrets, cymbals, and tambourines, and — can it be! carefully laid away in an open cabinet of exquisite design and workmanship, an old, worn lute.

Jesus draws closer and examines it critically. Yes, it is the same, and stringed for use, the same old lute that Jesus had given to Mary in the happy days of long ago. What blessed memories does that old and battered remnant of the past awaken, of pure and innocent days of youth, of song and dance under the palm trees of Magdala, of moonlight wanderings by the shell-strewn beach of Genesaret! O God! how long ago!

For the moment Jesus forgets where he is, and his hand trembles as he puts it out doubtfully to touch the precious thing, and tears wet his cheek. Then the glad thought comes to him: Why, with all this profusion of rich gifts, lying scattered carelessly about, should this worn and battered lute be so carefully preserved? In the thought was inspiration and hope. The strings of this old lute should be the cords that would draw the lost one back to virtue and home.

While Jesus stands spellbound before the old lute, there comes a rustle of silken garments and a wave of delicate perfume. Turning, he beholds standing in the full glare of a lamp — a woman! Spite of what he had seen at the chariot-race, in his thoughts Jesus had pictured the simple girlish Mary of the long ago, of the pastures and gardens of Galilee. Could this be she? This woman of proud and haughty mien, painted, rouged, and bedizened, attired like an empress?

Jesus gazed upon her in speechless wonder and dismay. The woman returned the gaze with a stony stare, and at length spoke. "Margaloth told me that you were here

and wished to see me. I suppose it is natural, after having done what you did for me at the chariot-race, that you should seek some reward, and I had arranged to send you a purse of gold. Here it is,—take it with my thanks.” The woman laid a heavy purse on the table, and went on. “Of course you must understand that such visits as this are very improper and entirely useless. I trust that your good sense will direct you to make this the last. I shall not cease to be grateful to you, and by Margaloth I can convey at any time presents of money or merchandise. Hereafter you will please remember that any communication you have to make must be made through Margaloth.”

Jesus arrested her, “Mary.” The woman had already turned her back towards Jesus; but she paused with lowered head. Jesus went on. “If I did not know that these words and these actions of yours were false and artificial, if I thought they were the language of your heart, I should despair. But I see in them not the real Mary, the daughter of Abraham and of Deborah, but they are like your clothes, your paint, and your jewels: they disguise and cover up, but do not change the real Mary I knew. I came here to plead with you once more to flee this life of sin and go to a place provided for you. Shall I go away without hope of ever seeing you restored to the fold of Israel?”

The woman moved away again slowly, very slowly, and paused at the door without turning. “Honorius,” she said, “has been very kind to me and has given me all that heart could wish, servants, riches, honor; he has made my mother mistress over his household. To-morrow he takes us on a journey to Antioch and Rome. Besides, neither my mother nor myself forget that we are Israelites, children of Abraham. I even have hopes that Honorius may be made a proselyte to Judaism. Such things have happened. Esther, you will remember, was a Jewess.”

At this moment a messenger from Margaloth entered

the room hurriedly and announced that "the young man's" life was endangered by any further stay and that he must hasten away. The woman turned in the lamp light, and with eyes that were no longer hard and stony but soft and tender, for one brief instant met the reproachful glance of Jesus and was gone.

As Jesus was emerging from the outer door he was attacked by a number of armed servants of Honorius, beaten, overpowered, bound, and thrown into a secret dungeon, deep down beneath the palace.

XXII

NICODEMUS

"In the Talmud is mentioned the story of Nicodemus' daughter, who, after immense wealth, came to abject poverty."—EDERSHEIM.

In Jerusalem at this time lived a man with his family by the name of Nicodemus. A Jew and a Pharisee by birth, he was still a man of liberal mind and varied accomplishments. His father, a favored official under the elder Herod, had acquired vast wealth, which Nicodemus as an only son had inherited.

In early life, Nicodemus had traveled much and, contrary to the teachings of the Rabbis, had applied himself to Greek learning. He had spent some years at Alexandria, and knew Philo. He had visited Athens and Rome. From Philo he had learned that a man may be a strict Jew and yet be a lover of Homer, Plato, and Socrates.

In Jerusalem he was head and center of a small, select coterie that indulged and cultivated foreign learning and literature. In part composing this circle of friends were Joseph of Arimathea and the Rabbi Gamaliel, who, though a Pharisee of the Pharisees, had so far broken loose from formalism and tradition as to have studied Greek and Roman learning. Some Greeks and Romans of wealth and station were admitted to this circle, and Pilate, the Roman Governor, condescended to patronize some of its leading members.

In delicate offices, where the Roman rule came in conflict with Jewish fanaticism and obstinacy, Nicodemus, Joseph, and Gamaliel were even sought by the haughty Roman as counselors. True, there were suspicions and murmurings among the Pharisaic party at Jerusalem against these Grecianizing Jews, but it was admitted by

all that their influence with Pilate had often softened the harshness of his rule and prevented conflicts that would have been disastrous.

Many concessions to Jewish bigotry and fanaticism had been granted by Pilate at the solicitation of these liberal-minded Israelites. Especially had this been the case in the matter of the ornaments on the Roman military standards and some votive tablets that Pilate had set up at his own palace on the mount of Zion. These ornaments consisted mainly of eagles and busts of the Emperor; but to the fanatic and suspicious Jews they were "graven images" in violation of the command of Moses, and rather than tolerate them within the Holy City every strict Jew was ready to die. To quiet the clamor that these things had raised, Pilate had condescended to invite Nicodemus, Joseph, and Gamaliel, with some others, to inspect the objectionable images, hoping through them to convince the people that they had no religious significance; but all had been in vain, and Pilate had reluctantly yielded to the representations of his Jewish friends and removed the "graven images."

But now a more serious matter had arisen. In the genuine Roman spirit of utility and thoroughness, Pilate had conceived the plan of supplying Jerusalem and the Temple with a plentiful supply of pure water by an aqueduct twenty-five miles long, to be built in the regular Roman way, with cemented rocks, to last thousands of years. As the work was to be for the exclusive benefit of Jerusalem and the Temple, and other sources of revenue having been exhausted, Pilate designed to make such use of the Temple Treasury as might be necessary in defraying the expense.

Pilate had begun to draw on the Temple Treasury. There had also been an accident in the prosecuting of the work on the aqueduct. A tower of masonry at Siloam had fallen and killed eighteen workmen, wounding many others. The cry had immediately been raised that the falling of the

tower was a direct judgment of God for the sacrilegious use of the Temple Treasury. The public mind, already inflamed by wrongs and usurpations and continually seeking for pretexts for sedition, was now aroused to the danger limit. Pilate felt it necessary to order an extra cohort of Dacian soldiers from Cæsarea, and he strengthened the guard at every point; yet, with his experienced hand on the pulse of the nation, he felt the swelling heart-throbs with growing alarm.

Notwithstanding every precaution of guards and proclamations, there were still secret gatherings of Zealots and Sicarii in that labyrinth of rooms and passages underneath the city, and each night fresh placards were posted on the walls, denouncing in most violent language the hated Roman and calling upon every son of Abraham to rise up in defense of God and Liberty.

For Pilate, the brave and veteran soldier, these threatening demonstrations had no terrors, except so far as they might, through representations at Rome, affect his standing as an administrator and induce Tiberius to order his recall. He knew that though openly and ostensibly subservient and friendly the High Priestly families of Jerusalem were, like all other Jews, secretly his enemies, and that a cabal of Priests and Pharisees was continually at work to effect his overthrow. Excessive violence and bloodshed by governors of Provinces was discountenanced at Rome even by the worst of the Emperors: it reduced the Imperial revenue and tended to enforce economy in the Imperial expenditures. The capacity of a people to pay taxes was in proportion to their peaceableness and docility. The Governors of Provinces were expected so to rule as to preserve the tax-paying quality at the maximum. Therefore it was that Pilate dreaded an insurrection and not for any fear of the results of a collision between his soldiers and an undisciplined mob, nor from any reluctance to shed blood.

The house of Nicodemus is one of those princely residences built in the time of Herod, who, himself the very prince of builders, had transformed Jerusalem almost as Nero afterwards did Rome. The oriental house, the reader should bear in mind, is built around an inclosed space, and all its beauty and display are confined to the inside of the building. The open space or cloister, in residences of the better sort, is divided into two sections by a high wall. One of these divisions, called the outer court, is used for the rough work of the establishment; though paved with brick or stone and kept scrupulously clean, as strictly required by Jewish Law, it was really the barn-yard of the place. All the domestic animals were kept there. The ground-floor rooms surrounding it were used for kitchen, store-rooms, granaries, and stables for the animals. It is also the servants' and slaves' quarters. The other division or inner court is beautifully paved with colored brick or costly stone, laid in mosaic patterns. It contains fountains, trees, and flowers.

The exterior of such a house is like that of a prison wall. It is built of rough, unhewn stone and is high, rough, and inaccessible. The entrance doors and gates are also like those of a prison, heavy, massive, and strong. The upper rooms of such mansions were often richly furnished and magnificently adorned. In every house in Jerusalem there were one or more "guest chambers," where Passover Pilgrims were allowed to eat the Paschal Lamb and spend the week of the Feast free of charge. To crown all, in the time of which we write, the roof had become the characteristic feature of every house: it was the assembling place for the family and all their guests; it was saloon, reception, and drawing room; it was the place for music and dance, for consultations, secret meetings, and cabals. Often it was furnished with luxurious summer-houses, and fantastic towers adorned the corners and the

parapet. Rich awnings of blue and white were spread as a protection against sun and dew.

Of the very best and largest of this type of structure is the house of Nicodemus. Summoning our Genie of the Lamp, we may visit it, this beautiful afternoon in the Spring of A. D. 30.

The street, like most others in Jerusalem, is very narrow,—not more than twelve feet wide, but clean swept and beautifully paved with white stone. The high, massive walls on either side make it dark and gloomy; but it is very clean. No modern city is so thoroughly and scrupulously policed as was Jerusalem. These massive walls are the outside walls of fashionable city residences. If we look straight up out of our dark alley, we can see, twenty or forty feet above, the ornamented parapet with its gilded towers, and the fluttering blue and white canopies. Often we will see Jewish faces leaning over the parapet on either side, and hear conversation going on across the narrow chasm. The only entrance to these gloomy abodes is through heavy, iron-bound, folding gates, with a small wicket cut in one of them for foot passengers and for common use.

Knocking at this wicket, we are admitted through a dark passage to the open space already described. The change is so sudden and so great that we are bewildered. From the gloom of a narrow alley, bare, treeless, dark, we are at a step in a sunlit Paradise. It is the abode of Peace.

The black-browed slave who opens the wicket speaks in low tones, and in the brooding silence we can hear the splash and murmur of fountains among the clumps of tall cane and oleander. The oleanders are in bloom and their rich perfume, with that of orange and citron, fills the air with sweet odors.

As we walk across, we pass a vine-clad summer house

hid away among the shrubbery,—with rustic seats and luxurious divans in cool retreats for the weary, the dreamer, or the sorrowing. Surely no Arcadian bower, no dream of far Cashmere could more entrance the senses than this cloistered solitude. We pause a moment at the marble basin of the fountain to watch the swarm of gold and silver fish that shimmer and sparkle in its crystal waters. A tall, white egret is also watching them with beady eyes, but they are protected from his onslaughts by a netting of silver wire.

Going on past the summer house, we see a young girl reclining on luxurious cushions. The closed eyes, with the regular rise and fall of the scant drapery over her bosom, show that she is fast asleep. A book which she was reading has fallen on her bare shoulder, and the hand that held it has sunk drooping to her girdle. Her face is very beautiful, with all the marks of ancient Jewish race and breeding; and the scant dress of home and secure retirement reveals a form of faultless mold. On her bare arms are many bracelets of pure gold, while one jeweled hand, outstretched, rests unconsciously on the glossy back of a gazelle that lies contentedly by her side. One extended foot, beneath a bare ankle, is shod with a light Laodicean sandal, whose fastenings are of yellow silk, studded with gems. If she should awake and look up, we should see that the edges of her eyelids are painted; and shining through the heavy plaits of her long, black hair, carelessly drawn across her throat and breast, we may see the glint and sparkle of a necklace of gold and gems. She is Rachel, the daughter and only heir to the princely house of Nicodemus.

Continuing our walk, we come to a flight of stone steps that mount to the open galleries of the second story, and thence by other stone steps we go up to the roof. Still shielded by our Genie of the Lamp, we may see and listen without being observed.

There is but one person on the roof,— a handsome, well-built man of middle age, evidently a pure Jew, reclining on a rich divan under a canopy. He seems intently absorbed in reading, and from time to time lowering his book and stroking his long black beard, he stares vacantly into space, as if in a reverie or dream.

He is at this moment so absorbed in his reading that he does not note the coming of two men, not even when they stand by his side. The taller and elder,— he with grizzled locks and a stoop of the shoulders,— is Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man and an honored member of the Great Sanhedrin. His companion, younger by some years, short, stout, and florid, is the renowned Rabbi Gamaliel. The two visitors exchange glances and the first motions of a smile play for an instant about their eyes; but their grave and reverent demeanor is scarcely changed, and when at last the reader becomes aware of their presence he arises and returns their salute with grace and dignity.

After the long salutations are over, Joseph, presuming, perhaps, upon his greater age, and referring to the book his friend has been reading, asks, “You seem so greatly interested in your book, friend Nicodemus, perhaps I may venture to ask you what it is that interests you so deeply.”

“Oh, it is nothing new, friend Joseph, and yet, in a sense, it is new. I am reading the *Gorgias* of Plato, and though I have read it before, perhaps twenty times, I still discover something new in it. The elevation and purity of the Greek mind and culture at its best is a phenomenon that grows upon me the more I study it. Did you ever think of it, Rabbi Gamaliel, that the flowering time of the Greek mind seems to have followed hard upon the decline and extinction of the prophetic office in the Jewish nation? That grand triad of Greeks, Hippocrates, Anaxagoras and Socrates, came immediately upon the world’s stage after our own Malachi.”

“I do not now recall any reference to it in either the

Midrash or the Haggada," answered Gamaliel, thoughtfully. "But the idea, even if new, is worth considering. Your thought would be that God never leaves His world without someone, in some way, to speak for Him. This is no doubt true, but to us as Jews it is hardly admissible that the prophetic office should *ever* in any case or sense belong or pass to the heathen. You couldn't go as far as that, brother Nicodemus; that is beyond even Philo and his Alexandrians."

Nicodemus did not answer immediately, and in the meantime Joseph took up the book Nicodemus had laid down and began looking through it carefully. At length Nicodemus, with slow deliberation, began his answer. "There seem to have been no prophets among the Greeks, not like ours at least. Their sorcerers and soothsayers were pure heathen, and their oracles too,—though that at Delphi is not so easily disposed of. But their great men seem to me to have been earnest seekers after truth, even like our own prophets, and I sometimes think were really informed of God as well as they."

"That God has visited heathen nations is no doubt true," answered Gamaliel. "Melchizedek was a Jebusite, and Poti-pherah, priest of On, whose daughter our father Joseph married, is believed to have been like Melchizedek a priest of the Most High God; but these are to be regarded only as intimations, invitations at most, to the heathen to come into the fold of Israel and join with us in the true worship of Jehovah. We must remember that no other people or nation ever had its Red Sea or its Sinai. No other has the Law or the Prophets."

Here Joseph, begging pardon for interrupting, asks to read a passage from the book Nicodemus had put down. "I happened to open," he said, "on that passage where Socrates is trying to convince Gorgias and the others that it is better for a man to suffer punishment for his sins than to escape punishment; that it is also better for him

to suffer injustice than to commit injustice: but here he goes even further. I will read.

“ ‘Be persuaded, then, by me, and follow me to that place where, when you have reached it, you shall live in happiness, both in life and after death. . . . And let whosoever will despise you as a fool and maltreat you, if he wish: yea, by Zeus, and cheerfully let him deal you that insulting blow, for no evil will come upon you if you be truly good and upright and abide in the practice of virtue.’ ”

Joseph laid down the book, and after a suitable pause went on: “I do not recall a precept of any of our Rabbis that is fully up to this, do you, Rabbi Gamaliel?”

“None precisely the same,” answered Gamaliel, “though there are some very similar, as you will remember. Hillel said, ‘What is hateful to thee, that do not to another.’ This he said is the whole Law. And Rabbi Akiba taught that Leviticus xix, 18 is the one rule of Life; and many other of our Rabbis have held more or less strictly by this doctrine.”

“Yes, our Rabbis have given us some very noble precepts,” interrupted Nicodemus; “but have any of them themselves lived up to their teachings? In studying the life of Socrates I have been very forcibly struck with this idea, that he lived what he preached and cheerfully died to vindicate what he taught. Now I am like you, brother Gamaliel, in believing that salvation must come through Israel, and that Jerusalem shall be, as our holy prophets have said, the mountain of the Lord’s House, and that all nations shall flow into it. But do you not believe that this idea, too much dwelt upon, may be hurtful to us?”

At this moment a servant brought word that Varus, who was now chief captain of the Roman Guard at Jerusalem, was at the gate, asking admittance.

“Show him up at once,” was the order of Nicodemus to the servant; then, turning to Gamaliel, he added, “He

comes, doubtless, as a messenger from Pilate; this trouble about the aqueduct is growing very serious. We must exert ourselves or there will be an uprising, and terrible times."

Joseph put aside the book, and with stern, anxious faces the three men awaited the coming of Varus.

The Roman Captain was not unknown at the house of Nicodemus. The first day of his coming to Jerusalem as Captain he had seen Rachel, and had fallen violently in love with her, and was now openly a suitor for her hand. This, together with circumstances already related, had much softened the feelings of the haughty Roman towards the Jews, and so, with his high official position and also as a man of good family in Rome, he had come to be received at the house of Nicodemus with confidence and respect.

With characteristic brevity, Varus made short work of the long salutations that were habitual to the Jews, and proceeded at once to business.

"I am come," he said, "at command of the noble Pilate, to confer with you about the seditious movement which has been started here in Jerusalem, about the Temple Treasure and the aqueduct. I do not need to tell you that his excellency the Governor has nearly lost all patience with these people, and his orders to me this morning were to cut them down without mercy; but his wife and I prevailed on him to wait and stay his hand for a time. But, begging your pardon, I must say that your people *are* in this very unreasonable. This aqueduct is very much needed, as you all admit, for the good of the city and even necessary for your Temple. The lack of plenty of pure water is making your Temple sacrifices a menace to the health of the city; and yet listen to the outcry against any relief.

"Pilate cannot stir abroad but he is fairly mobbed, and he has to harken to insulting cries and epithets from

the lowest of the people. Then the falling of the tower at Siloam, that so much has been made of, I personally investigated, and can say positively that it was the Jewish overseer of the work who was wholly to blame, and only eight of the eighteen killed were Jews. The other ten were Greeks and Syrians. Now of course this is a very unpleasant state of things, and I do not willingly trouble you honorable men with it; but you see how it is. I will have to execute the Governor's order.

"Tomorrow is a feast day with you, and there will be a great crowd of your people here in Jerusalem, and knowing what I do I am certain that there will be much blood shed unless something is done to prevent it. Perhaps you do not know it, but our spies have given us certain intelligence that Barabbas and other emissaries of the Zealots, and perhaps Jacobus himself, are here in Jerusalem, stirring up the people; and you will readily see that if these leaders could be taken and disposed of, it would probably save many lives."

Varus paused and silence was at first the only answer. The three Jews did not change countenance or make any visible sign. At length Nicodemus answered. "You would not intimate that we have any communication with the men you speak of, Barabbas or Jacobus, and so what can we do? What do you *advise* us to do?"

"Oh, I have no advice to offer; it would be presumption in me to do so. I simply give you the facts; I must leave you to act upon them as you see fit."

"Has anything been said to Caiaphas, our High Priest, or to Annas?" asked Gamaliel.

"They have received the same notice that I have given you," answered Varus, "but nothing will come of that. We understand well enough that the house of Annas is unfriendly to the Zealots, and would gladly see them wiped out with Roman swords."

Again Nicodemus. "It is doubtful if we can do much

to allay this excitement among our people but we will do what we can; and in any case we would have you to know that your kindness in doing as you have is appreciated and will be remembered. I think we can promise that the multitude in the streets to-morrow will not be armed, and I will suggest this for you to do: let your soldiers be disguised as Jews, with good stout clubs concealed under their abas. Let them mix with the crowd of Pilgrims, and if they attempt any mob-violence let your soldiers fall upon them with their clubs, and I think that will end it as well as the use of your swords."

The Roman Captain smiled grimly at this suggestion of Nicodemus, and after promising that he would commend the same to Pilate, withdrew without ceremony.

XXIII

THE PLOTTERS

"There was an underground Jerusalem also, which burrowed everywhere under the city, under the Temple, beyond the city walls."—
EDERSHEIM.

When, forty years after the events we are recording, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, it was found, what had long been suspected, that there existed an underground city of Jerusalem, of vast extent, with passages and places of exit far beyond the walls. In this subterranean city from the time of the elder Herod, the Zealots, who were never without some sort of organization, had made an arsenal and a rallying point.

It is the night succeeding the meeting of Gamaliel, Nicodemus, and Joseph with Varus. In one of these deep apartments underneath the Temple area is assembled a company of Zealots. Barabbas is here, with Menahem and Simon and Eleazer, the brothers of Jacobus. It is feared that Jacobus himself, with his giant stature and striking appearance, cannot so disguise himself as to escape notice in Jerusalem, where the emissaries of Rome are constantly on the watch; and so he has been persuaded to remain away.

The room is of considerable size, and there are perhaps a hundred men present. It is the night of the Passover, and the Paschal Supper has been solemnly prepared and eaten here. The prescribed prayers have been said and the Psalms sung.

Thronging in and about Jerusalem are from two to three millions of zealous Jews, come here to celebrate this feast from all parts of the known world. To every one

of them the mere presence of the heathen Romans in the Holy City is an offense that always and ever stirs the fountains of deepest feeling; and now the abominable heathen has laid sacrilegious hands on the sacred Treasure of the Temple, the Treasure that is "Corban," dedicated to God: shall this be longer borne, and with five hundred thousand sons of Abraham in call, capable of bearing arms?

This is the question that these hundred men are considering. The place is lighted by torches, whose lurid glare illumines forms and faces that startle us. Dark, fierce, wild features, lined and furrowed by care and suffering, and framed in black masses of long, uncombed hair, they need no spokesman or expositor. Well may even mighty Rome pause and draw back before she drives a nation of such men to despair.

It is near midnight before the supper is ended, and all the rites performed. At that hour a messenger from Nicodemus is brought into the assembly. Barabbas explains to them that Nicodemus is a secret friend of the Zealots, and that his messenger is to be trusted; whereupon the messenger proceeds to represent the futility of any present outbreak, because of the overwhelming power of the Roman soldiery, and advises that if they do any thing at all it should be simply to make petition and outcry, as had been done in the case of the standards and the votive offerings, when Pilate had been worn out by continual clamor and had at last yielded to the popular demand.

To Barabbas, Menahem, and the leaders generally, it had all along appeared that the cause was not yet ripe, and they signified their acquiescence in the policy recommended by Nicodemus; but there were dark frowning faces not a few, in which the implacable old Maccabean spirit shone forth with a distinctness not to be mistaken. The messenger of Nicodemus had hardly ceased speaking when one of these, Ehud by name, a man of middle age, with a visage seamed and drawn by scars of old wounds,

sprang to his feet and with wild gestures and almost screaming with passion, thus addressed them:

“Away with such counsels! By the Holy City of God, I say away with it! Who are these you call our friends and who give this cowardly advice? Nicodemus, you say, is a rich and powerful Rabbi. And Joseph and Gamaliel, too, you say, have influence with Pilate the Roman Governor. God of my fathers! What more do we need to know! What is Rome to-day, if not the binding together of the rich to make slaves of the poor. There is not in all Rome’s broad domain a rich man upon whose heart is not graven the image of her abominations, the foul bird of prey,—not one whose knees do not bow down to her and whose mouth does not kiss her. There is no middle ground in this controversy. He that is not for us is against us! Down with all intermediaries. In the end, they will be found against us. What rich man is there among you who is not the owner of slaves! What one of them all can lay his hand upon the altar of God and say, ‘No Lord but Jehovah, no tax but to the Temple, no friend but a Zealot.’

“And what does this our war-cry mean, if not the destruction of all human government and the Brotherhood of Man? We say, ‘Call no man Master, One alone is Master, even God.’ Do you believe this? I ask it of *you*, the spokesman of Nicodemus, of *you*, Menahem and Simon and Eleazer, the sons of the murdered Judas, of you, Barabbas. Do you believe what you say? As a man believes, so *is* he. What we sincerely believe we act. And what is Rome, that she should rule Israel and invade with her uncleanness the Temple of the Most High God!

“Listen: I was born a Galilean of the city of Sepphoris. My father and brother and I fought under Judas, the father of Jacobus, of Simon, Menahem, and Eleazer. When Sepphoris was taken and destroyed by Varus, the

Governor of Syria, my father, with many others, was crucified by the Romans. His dying words to me were like those of the old Maccabean: 'Cease not to be a Zealot, my son, and fear nothing but God.'

"I, with my mother and sisters and thousands of others, was sent in chains to Rome as slaves. Of my mother and sisters I lost all trace: they were swallowed up. I became the property of a Roman Senator,—one of his household. By years of labor, pain, and self-denial beyond what tongue can tell, I purchased my freedom. Like a bird let loose from its cage, I sought the land of my birth. I had not forgotten. The land of my fathers was still dear to me. More than ever was I a Zealot.

"I had engaged to work my passage by ship to Cæsarea. Then, with thousands of other Jewish freedmen of Rome, I was seized and put on shipboard, and sent to fight other slaves who had made insurrection in Sardinia. At the same time all the Jews in Rome were banished by Tiberias, and all their property confiscated. On shipboard we were nailed in under hatches like swine. The horrors of that passage I cannot find words to tell. Many died, and were left to rot.

"Landed in Sardinia, we were supplied with nothing but arms. Clothes, food, and shelter we must wrest from the enemy or go without. Sardinia is owned by a few rich men of Rome, who never visit it, and there are no laborers but slaves,—slaves from every land under heaven. Some of the estates there have twenty thousand slaves. We few thousand Jewish freedmen could do nothing against them. Many joined the insurgents, others lay down and died, and still others were scourged to death by Roman taskmasters. We dwindled and disappeared. So far as I know, I only am escaped to tell the story, and my scars speak for me. And still there be some that say, 'Roman Government is good, better than God's Government.' May God smite him dead who says so.

“As I said, I was for years in the household of a Roman Senator; my eyes and ears were open; I saw and heard. The best of Rome is vile as Sodom. Her chief men and even her Philosophers are addicted to unnatural crime, and use their learning to defend its practice. Marriage is only a sham. Even women of the noblest families are open harlots. Their gods are like themselves, and I have heard men pray in their Temples and offer gifts for the satisfaction of unnatural lusts and for the death of rich relatives; and then I have heard them curse and revile their gods when their prayers were not granted. Let no man tell me that Rome should rule over the People of God.

“Dost thou not believe the Prophets? ‘And the fourth beast,’ says the prophet Daniel, ‘shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces.’ ‘And this kingdom,’ he says, ‘shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.’ Where is the vile, knee-crooking slave of Rome who dares gain-say this! And behold, do not all men know that the time is at hand? The seventy weeks of the prophet Daniel are now ended and *the Messiah is here*. He is a Bridegroom come to his Bride. Shall he find the Bridal Chamber full of all uncleanness, of toads and serpents, or shall he find it swept and garnished? *We* are the friends of the Bridegroom. Let us up and be doing.”

Ehud’s speech was applauded with clamorous outbursts, and yet so strong was the influence of the sons of Judas that a few, even of the most violent, hesitated and held back. Except the few representatives from distant lands, and Barabbas and Judas Iscariot, they were all Galileans and skin-clad shepherds from the pastures of Gilcad and Bashan. Judas and Barabbas were the only Judeans. Barabbas made an artful and eloquent plea for temporizing and delay. Menahem spoke for the sons of Judas to the

same effect, but briefly and in rude, sententious manner, for he was no orator. And still there were murmurings and black looks of discontent. Procrastination and waiting,—hope deferred,—had made many a heart sick.

After a short conference in a low tone, Menahem brought a stranger forward into the light and introduced him to the Assembly as “Jesus of Nazara,” the son of Joseph and a friend of the Order. “A friend! and why not a Zealot!” murmurs Ehud and the rest. “Doubtless another emissary of Nicodemus and the Aristocrats.” There is loud clamor of opposition and for some moments Jesus stands silent, waiting the subsidence of the tumult. Gradually, as these wild men gaze upon that wondrous face and into those calm, clear eyes, so strong and yet so sad, their murmurs cease, and the place becomes still.

Then Jesus speaks. “May the peace of God be with you.”

These are familiar words, but as they fall from the lips of Jesus, clear, distinct, sonorous, infused with the magnetism of a great soul, they have new meaning. They are as lamps that had burned out refilled and relighted. Every eye is at once riveted upon Jesus, and the place becomes so still that the slight scintillations of the torches sound distinct.

Then Jesus goes on. “If a man designs to build a house or a tower, what is it he first does? Doth he not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it, lest after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish.

“Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down and consulteth, whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh with twenty thousand. So we who would make war with Rome, if we would be wise, must first count the cost.

“Remember first of all that we are in Judea, and not in Galilee. Look around you! How many Jerusalemites or even Judeans are here? Only two,—Barabbas and Judas of Kerioth. We should know that without Jerusalem we are helpless; and Jerusalem is not only not with us, — Jerusalem is against us. As shown by Barabbas, Annas and Caiaphas and the rulers of Jerusalem may speak us fair, but they would rejoice to see us exterminated. Their spies and agents have everywhere warned all Pilgrims against us.

“Again I say, and this above all: Let us not forget God! Sayest thou, We do trust Him to the uttermost, and so doing, He will save us. If we trust Him, then will we obey His words; we will *wait* for Him. And what sayeth the Scripture? ‘To me belongeth vengeance and recompense: their foot shall slide in due time, for their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.’

“To the Messiah God hath given all power in Heaven and on earth, and He it is whom God hath appointed to redeem Israel. What man of you all will deny this! Of ourselves we can do nothing, and we believe that the Messiah is at hand. Surely it is for us to await his coming.”

The speech of Jesus brought forward nothing that was not already known. It contained nothing new; and yet, simple as it was, it had a profound effect on his audience. In his manner and bearing was a magnetism and authority that carried all with him; and the meeting broke up with the understanding that there should be no violence offered to Pilate or the Romans at the Feast, nor any armed demonstration,—only petition and clamor as heretofore.

We say Jesus carried all with him: as always, there were a few exceptions. Ehud and Judas of Kerioth, called Iscariot, and several others of the more violent faction were still unconvinced. They drew together, and with black looks and silent reprobation stole away in the darkness.

XXIV

THE BATTLE

“There were present at that season some that told Him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.”—
LUKE xiii, 1.

It is the day following the scenes just described, and we are near the Temple in Jerusalem. The hour is noon, and the morning services and sacrifices having been completed, the crowd is pouring forth from every gate and has already filled every open space about the Temple and all the narrow streets leading to it.

The services for the day are over, and yet the crowd does not disperse: it seems as if waiting for something yet to be seen or done; and instead of the jollity and good humor usually to be seen on such occasions, there is a troubled, anxious look on every face, and every man is talking to his neighbor in low tones, but with fierce glances and gestures that betoken much excitement.

Moving boldly and, as we might think, ostentatiously among the crowd, we see the same smooth, smiling, and decorous agent of Nicodemus whom we saw last night addressing the Zealots. He pauses here and there to speak aloud, sometimes in Greek and sometimes in Aramaic, words of caution, of soothing and restraint, while at the same time elsewhere in the crowd we see the dark faces of Ehud and Judas and their cabal moving swiftly hither and thither, dropping fiery Hebrew words in listening ears. The Roman spies and Roman soldiers, dressed as Jews, that are scattered everywhere, soon get their eyes on Ehud and his confreres, and though they understand not their Hebrew words, their object is plain, and Ehud and his companions are marked men.

And now the cry arises from the far outskirts of the crowd, "To Pilate's House!" "To the House of Pilate!" Instantly the words are taken up by others here and there, and quickly swelled by a hundred thousand voices, the cry rises to a roar like a hundred whirlwinds. The sound of it shakes the massive gates of the Temple in their hangings, and sets a-quiver the plates of gold that form its roof.

To Annas and Caiaphas and the priestly throng still within the Temple, it is as the sound of the passing bell of a rich relative whose estate they will inherit. In their hearts they are glad, but they must appear to mourn. They have joined themselves to the Romans for a division of spoils: but they are still Jews enough to treasure up in bitter remembrance unnumbered wrongs, and deep down in their hearts still to regard their imperious masters with unextinguishable hate. And scarcely less is their hatred of the Amhaartz, the Zealots, those vile Democrats who, hating the Romans not more than the Jewish Aristocrats, would not only drive out the Romans but demand a return to the primitive rule of Samuel and Eli, who would reduce all things to a level, whose secret watchword is, "Call no man Master."

That these and the Romans should come in conflict and destroy each other was a consummation sincerely desired by Caiaphas and Annas and by all the rich Sadducees of their party. But of course it was ruin to be so known. They must dissemble. And so we now behold the dignified Rabbi Boethus, whom we saw at the chariot race in Tiberias, issuing from the Temple gate in all the state of a "Ruler in Israel." Broad phylacteries are on his forehead and arm, and there is the rich tallith, with its broad borders and fringes, and before him march a company of armed retainers, and a stalwart Herald bearing an immense ram's-horn. Boethus takes a station on an elevated terrace of the Temple, and his Herald blows a mighty blast on his

horn. For a moment the flow of the crowd, already begun towards the house of Pilate, is arrested, and Boethus, in the solemn, dignified manner of a preacher repeating an old, worn-out formula, addresses them, and commands them in the name of Caiaphas the High Priest to desist from any tumultuous proceedings towards Pilate or the Roman soldiers.

As soon, however, as the name of Boethus is given out in the crowd and the nature of his address becomes known, his voice is drowned in the roar of the multitude crying out, "Down with the usurers!" "Down with the regraters!" "Away with the money-changers and dealers in doves!" Some, more bold than the rest, even throw dust into the air, and cry, "Send down to us those Clubmen of Annas you have with you there, and let *them* stop us!"

Boethus, with lengthened visage and half-shut eyes, continues to mutter something for a few moments longer; then, shaking the dust from his feet against them and still guarded by his retinue of clubmen, he solemnly marches back and disappears in the Temple.

And now the multitude, without restraint again, and louder than before, takes up the cry, "To Pilate's House!" "To the House of Pilate!" and surges tumultuously forward through every narrow street, filling the deep gorge of the Cheesemongers and rolling towards the heights of the old city of David like an inundation. At first it would seem that the Temple Area is swept bare as a desert strand. The swarm of priests, Levites, and Temple officials are all hid away within, and over at the adjoining fortress and tower of Antonia, where Varus holds command, no soldier has appeared during the tumult to provoke violence.

But now, swarming out over all its lofty towers and battlements, the soldiers of Varus appear, watching from their elevated position the movement of the mob, which

they expect momentarily to be ordered out to cut down and disperse. And now, too, out from a darkened niche under the tower of John, and near the Temple entrance, walk slowly forth two men, who, from that point of vantage, have been intently observant of all that has passed. As they come out into the open, we recognize them as Jesus and his cousin John.

Jesus for the occasion, perhaps to attract less notice, has on the ordinary sudar, or head covering of a countryman, which spreads over neck and shoulders, and makes his long flowing hair less noticeable. John is the same as we last saw him at the cave of Addi, clothed only in a coat of skins girt about the loins,—wooden sandals on his bare feet, secured by leather thongs, and his head covered only by his great mass of hair, which descends to his girdle,—a weird, grim figure. Yet, far from being unique, we noticed many such in the Temple crowd. They are a product of the times and the country. Instead of following the multitude, Jesus and John turn north, and, following the Temple wall, pass under the frowning battlements of Antonia. As they pass the fortress, the soldiers on the walls jeer and laugh at the uncouth figure of John, but neither he nor Jesus so much as cast an eye at their persecutors, but pass on and disappear towards the Fish Gate and the road to the desert.

But it is time to seek the multitude that has gone towards the house of Pilate, the roar of which still sounds from beyond the gorge of the Tyrophean. The house of Pilate is now what *was* the palace of the elder Herod. It is in the old city of David, on the sacred mount of Zion. Since the foreign rule of Antiochus, this ancient possession and most revered spot has been gradually alienated from all sacred uses, and in the time of which we write it is given up to the palatial residences of the rich and to heathen abominations.

Herod, who as a Jew had built a Temple to Jehovah

a hundred times more costly and magnificent than that of Solomon, had also, in imitation of Rome, erected theaters and amphitheaters and hippodromes of great magnificence. If Solomon "built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites," so did Herod build heathen temples and erect statues and votive offerings to Cæsar. On the sacred mount of Zion he had erected for himself a palace which was thought equal to any then in the world. Extensive grounds about it were cleared, leveled, and made into parks and gardens with fountains and rivers and lakes, pillared porticos and shady retreats. About it all, to protect himself against the ever present danger of rebellion, he erected a massive wall of immense thickness and strength. Great military towers arose at the gates and at intervals along the whole wall. It was both a residence and a citadel. Here Pilate lived.

Hither Jesus was brought on that day of horrors. On this same Zion's Hill, and between Pilate's house and the Temple Area, were other and similar evidences of the wealth and power of the great Herod. The theater and hippodrome are here, magnificent in gold and silver and precious stones, and all manner of heathen devices. The Xystos is here, a vast colonnaded inclosure for public assemblies. The palace of the Maccabees and the High Priest's palace are all on Zion's hill, and on the most direct road between the Temple and the house of Pilate.

If the reader will now take any good map of ancient Jerusalem and study it carefully, he will observe, first, that Jerusalem is built on four hills. He will notice that the quarter Zion is separated from the quarter Moriah and from the quarter Akra by a deep valley, the Tyropean, or the valley of the Cheesemongers. The sides of this valley are very steep, and are everywhere in terraces for streets or buildings. He will observe, further, that the old

city of David, or Zion, in addition to very marked natural boundaries, has an immense wall separating it entirely from all other parts. This wall, built originally by the old Jebusite occupants, rebuilt by David, and immensely improved and strengthened by Herod, is of great thickness and fifty feet in height. The towers which guard and strengthen it are among the best works of the kind in all the world. Some of them rise a hundred and eighty feet in air, and all are built of pure white marble, each block of which is thirty feet long, fifteen feet broad, and eight feet thick, and all joined so perfectly that Josephus, who saw them, declares that they showed no seam and appeared like the natural rock.

It will be understood that no attempt is here made to give a full description of Jerusalem, or of any large part of it. The only purpose is to have the reader get a clear idea of the particular places that are connected with the present narrative, and of their relative position.

Now in going from the Temple to Zion, there are two roads or routes in common use. The first, and shorter, is by a huge bridge which starts out from the southwest corner of the Temple Area, and crossing the deep gorge of the Tyrophean connects through a mighty gateway with Zion, at or near its northeast corner. From this point the road leads up and over marble terraces and amidst the palatial abodes of the numerous resident Priesthood, of Scribes, Pharisees, and Merchant Princes. Pilate's house and grounds are far away, near the northwest corner of Zion and not far from the Gennath Gate, which there gives the second entrance from the Tyrophean.

In following this road by the bridge from the Temple to the house of Pilate, we pass the notable places and residences already mentioned. The other route to Pilate's house and Zion lies first downward into the valley, and thence west up this valley to the Gennath Gate, at the northwest corner of Zion. Here, near the mighty tower

of Hippicus, which guards this gate, we gain entrance, and are then not far from the house of Pilate. In taking this last named route from the Temple, we pass through the business part of the city; the shops and bazaars and markets are mostly here. The smiths and artizans all ply their trades in this quarter, and sell their products direct to the consumer. On our left, as we pass up this valley, the steep hill of Zion rises abruptly to a great height, and high on a rocky ridge, difficult itself of access from the valley, towers the mighty wall of Herod, with its towers of polished marble, all filled with the veteran soldiers of Rome.

On this particular occasion the mob naturally seeks the nearest and easiest road, that by the bridge. As we see, the bridge becomes at once so crowded and jammed by the eager throng that thousands turn away to take the longer and more difficult route by the Tyropean and the Gennath Gate. Joining the crowd that goes by the bridge, we are soon across the valley and toiling up the steep of Zion. The street we are on, though the most aristocratic one in the city, is scarcely more than an alley. The residences on either side, though splendid and luxurious beyond description within, present to the street only bare, high walls and mighty gates closed and barred.

The High Priest's palace, where Caiaphas lives, is not far from the bridge, on the lower slope of the hill. We pass it in silence. The ingrained reverence of the Jew for his priesthood is not yet overcome by the remembrance of the heathen Jason or the traitor Joazer, nor by the knowledge that Caiaphas is an enemy and an aristocrat. The priests are the anointed of God, and whatever their crimes, they must be held in reverence; and so we pass on, through the noble square of the Xystos, with its marble and jasper columns and porticos, to the huge, frowning mass of the Palace of the Maccabees. Built and occupied by that patriot family in the glorious time of their rule,

it is still an object of reverence to every Jew, though now owned by the degenerate son of Herod, the hated Antipas. It is unoccupied now except by the necessary guards and servants to keep and tend its extensive grounds and gardens.

As we come up to it, a patriot Galilean in the crowd strikes up the forty-fourth Psalm, familiar beyond thought to every Jew, and instantly the multitude is singing: "We have heard with our ears, O God; our fathers have told us what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old: how Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thine hand." The sound rolls and echoes back from the heights of Akra and the Temple Hill, and thunders in the ears of Pilate, as he paces the floor of his great hall in anxious thought.

This governing of the Jewish People, Pilate had found from the very first, was no sinecure. That obstinate, fanatical spirit, entirely fearless of death, at the same time working in secret, pulling all the wires of intrigue and keeping the ears of the Emperor filled with secret accusations, was no easy thing to deal with, even for an absolute ruler,—and Pilate was far from being absolute. The sword of Damocles hung over him, as over every other instrument of the Imperial System. The payment of taxes was the main consideration under Tiberius and succeeding emperors, and in Judea the taxes were already in arrears. A general revolt would mean loss of revenue, and even a call on Rome for succor and contributions.

While Pilate walks the floor and listens to the increasing roar of the approaching multitude, there comes in to him softly Procula his wife. She lays her hand on his shoulder, and for a time walks silently by his side. She is a beautiful woman, and is dressed and adorned with all the art of Roman luxury. "My Pontius will be patient and forbearing with these poor wretched Jews," she says at length, turning towards Pilate and looking beseechingly into his grim face.

Pilate stops in his walk, and, facing Procula squarely, takes her hand from his shoulder and gazes sternly into her eyes. "Thou hast listened too much to those artful proselyting Rabbis, I fear, my Procula. Gamaliel and Nicodemus and Joseph have won thee over to be a Jewess. Is it not so?"

"Not so, my Pontius," answered Procula, meeting Pilate's distrustful glance with steady eyes. "I have learned much, it is true, from these good men,—much of this people and their history that it is good to know. As you yourself have said, to govern wisely we must know intimately those whom we would govern. *You* have learned much from these wise and virtuous men, and your opinions of this people have been modified greatly; but you would think it unjust for me to call you a Jew."

Pilate resumed his walk without answering, and Procula went on: "I am not a Jewess, because, for one reason, I am not good enough; and what is more, even though a Roman and the daughter of a Scipio, I am not *brave* enough. Jewish history is full of examples of the bravest and noblest of women; and few of the common women we see about us but fears what they call *sin* more than death. This young daughter of Nicodemus, who comes here sometimes, beautiful, accomplished, and favored in every way as she is, would not hesitate to die for either her country or her religion. They are a wonderful people, are these Jews. It is hardly strange that they claim to be the chosen people of God. We must bear with them, my Pontius, for mercy truly is a nobler thing than vengeance."

Meanwhile the mob has reached and poured into the open space about the theater and the Hippodrome, at sight of which the Psalm singing dies upon the lips, and the people gaze upon these heathen abominations in silence, but with hearts swelling with rage, with a sense of insult and irrevocable wrong. Suddenly a voice in the crowd shrills out, "Thou shalt not make into thee any graven

image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in the heavens above, nor in the earth beneath, nor in the waters under the earth." In a moment there is a hubbub, as of Tophet. Cries and execrations swell again into a roar, as of an angry sea.

Stones, torn from the pavement, begin to rain against the gilded effigies and heathen ornaments of the façade, and then the two Roman sentries who guard the entrance become the target for a fusillade of stones. But they do not flinch, and continue to walk their beat till knocked senseless and dragged within by their comrades. Their orders have been strict, not to resist; and like Roman soldiers they have obeyed,—but only to treasure up the insult for usurious vengeance, and a vengeance that is to become the world's horror to the end of time.

And now the mob is at the gates of the great wall surrounding the palace of Herod, which encloses the parks and gardens of a private residence only, and are within the main city wall but not part of it. They are forty-five feet high and massive enough to resist the attack of any military engine then in existence. These extensive gardens and parks about the house of Pilate have been kept open to the public by all the Roman Governors, as had been done by Herod. At night the gates are shut, but during the day no one is denied access to them: Pilate has not yet thought it expedient to change the rule.

The tower at the entrance, and others rising at regular intervals along the whole wall, are immensely strong, and of great height. They are all manned by Roman soldiers, though none is here in sight to offend the patriot sensibilities. The mob pours through the gates and swarms about the palace, overturning precious vases and statuary, trampling over beds of rare plants and flowers, to the great grief of Procula,—who is looking out with fear and trembling over the sea of wild, excited, obdurate human faces.

And now for the first time the real object of the mob becomes apparent. The cry of "Corban! Corban!" and "Restore the Temple Treasure! Restore the Temple Treasure!" taken up and repeated by fifty thousand voices, wild and shrill with fanatical excitement, may well appal a stouter heart than that of poor Procula, who clings to her husband's arm and looks into his grim, stern face, fearing the worst.

But Pilate, as we know, has not been taken by surprise: his measures have been taken. And now, bare headed, and wrapped simply in his Roman toga, he walks out alone on the high balcony that overlooks the surging crowd and, standing like a statue done in bronze, waits for silence. Instantly every tongue is stilled and every eye fixed on the motionless figure of Pilate.

The austere Roman surveys the crowd calmly for a moment, without speaking, but at length, without any attempt at oratory and without raising his voice above a dignified and commanding tone, he says, "Know, O ye Jews, that it is through my mercy and forbearance that ye are not already severely punished for this unlawful assemblage. Listen, now, to what I say. Treasure it in wise hearts, and disperse quietly to your homes. The rule of Rome is just, and you should not need to be told that her arm is all powerful. Your seditions have been crushed too many times for you to require further proofs.

"The aqueduct which I am building, and against which you raise this senseless outcry, is a thing absolutely necessary for the health of your city and for the sacrifices at your Temple. To go on with this work, undertaken wholly for your good, it was necessary to use the funds in your Treasury. The money will not be restored. Now obey my command, and disperse quietly."

Pilate's address was given in Greek, and to a considerable number of his auditors its meaning had to be explained by fellow Jews in the crowd who were familiar with that

language. Then there is a confused low rumble of countless voices, broken at length, as by picket shots in advance of battle, by here and there a wild shrill cry, which soon swells into a discordant roar, more savage and persistent than any before. Swelling now above the cries of "Corban! Corban!" and "Restore the Treasure," are heard the deadlier notes of sedition and rebellion. "Down with the tyrant!" "Away with the heathen!" and from a large group of Galileans, where we see Ehud and Boaz, Menahem and Judas, arises the wild war cry of the Zealots: "No tax but to the Temple! No friend but a Zealot! No master but God."

The outlook is threatening in the extreme. The total of the Roman army in Jerusalem is not above fifteen thousand men, and here is a mob of fifty thousand frenzied fanatics, with forty times that number of sympathizers within call. But Pilate does not flinch; he still stands like a statue on the high balcony overlooking the crowd and watching every motion with a steadfast eye. At length, when the noise and confusion seems to have reached its height, from the midst of the band of Galileans bursts the wild shrill note of a trumpet of war. The sound of it rises and swells like a tocsin above the roar of the multitude, and for an instant even the nerves of the iron Roman on the balcony are shaken by a tremor of dismay. But he stands firm.

A moment later, and a stone torn from the pavement and hurled as from a catapult by some strong shepherd's hand in the crowd crashes through the balustrade, splintering one of the jasper pilasters and, grazing the thigh of Pilate, strikes with a heavy thud against the marble wall behind him. Another and another stone follows in quick succession and aimed so well that Pilate's toga is torn and his skin set bleeding. It is time for him to act. He raises his hand above his head as the signal, and instantly throughout the crowd the disguised soldiers of Pilate, each

with a club and a dagger drawn from beneath his aba, begin an onslaught upon those of the mob who seem most violent, and soon in wild panic the multitude is crushing and trampling one another in its haste to escape through the gates.

Only the club has been used on the unarmed mob; but now the band of Galileans, the last to retire, holding together and retreating slowly and sullenly, call for different treatment. Again Pilate raises his hand, and forth from the great tower at the gate pours a cohort of picked soldiers. Pilate's spies have long ago informed him of the secret machinations of these Galilean Zealots, and now that they are in considerable numbers separated and identified, it is Pilate's object to destroy them utterly,—a thing easier said than done; for now each Galilean, throwing off his outer garment, shows himself armed with a short heavy sword and a small iron-bound wooden shield. Some, as Menahem and his brothers, Judas Iscariot and Barabbas, have breast-plates of iron. Some of the fishermen and shepherds, after throwing off their sheep-skin coats, were nearly naked, entirely without armour and unskilled in the use of the sword; but each had a sling and a bag of smooth stones at his girdle, and with these, as the Romans advanced, many a stout warrior was laid low.

In the hand-to-hand fight that ensued no quarter was given or asked. For the Galilean it was victory or death. To be taken was death, and to sell his life dearly was each man's resolve. To Barabbas alone, the position was a false one; he alone had planned very differently. But being caught with these Galilean Zealots, there was nothing he could say or do to clear himself in the eyes of the jealous Pilate; so he, like the rest, resolved to do and die.

In these hand-to-hand encounters with swords, it was a question only of seconds,—the guard, the stroke, often the deadly grapple with dagger thrusts in eyes and throats.

What the Zealots lacked in warlike skill and prepara-

tion they made up in that desperate valor that comes to all men, and even to the wolf at bay. Barabbas was known in Jerusalem, and had before this given many occasions of offense; so now the Captain of the Roman cohort singled him out for his own prey,—apparently an easy task, for Barabbas, smaller and without armor, appeared no match for his stalwart antagonist. But the battle, then as now and ever, is not always to the strong. Barabbas, thin, wiry, and active as a desert stag, danced round his enemy, avoiding thrusts and strokes almost like an unsubstantial wraith. At length, seeing that the heavy Roman was breathing hard with unwonted effort, Barabbas threw down his shield, and with a dagger in his left hand and sword in his right became at once the assailant. Feinting a thrust at the Roman's face, which caused him to raise his shield, Barabbas plunged beneath the up-lifted arm and, regardless of the terrible wound that he got in the act, with an upward thrust of his sword reached the heart of the Roman, who collapsed like a wet cloth.

Meantime, the Galileans as a whole are faring badly. The greater part have gone down in the first encounter, and the shepherd slingers have been the most effective warriors. These, affecting to fly, at the proper distance brought their slings to bear, and against their deadly missiles, crashing through helm and visor, there was no defense. And so Menahem and his brothers, with Barabbas, Ehud, Boaz, and Judas, found themselves at last, with a few scattered slingers, alone upon the field. The Romans, sure of their prey, and in momentary expectation of reinforcements from Antonia, have slackened their attack, and are resting on their arms. The Galileans have been forced back far from the gate, which is thus left unguarded and offers a possibility of escape.

Simon, second only to Jacobus the pride and glory of Galilee, alone is unwounded, and to him at this moment comes the thought that by the sacrifice of one, the others

may escape. Men in such situations require no long explanations. A word to Menahem, a look, a sign, it is understood; and yet there is a moment of indecision. Can they leave their brother to be slaughtered by Roman swords, that they may live? (The world and history will so report it.) No! a thousand times, No! Rather die a thousand deaths! And yet! And yet! There is the Sacred Cause, the Cause of God. What is life or death, glory, fame, good or ill, suffering or loss, compared to that! Should not one die that the rest may live? *For vengeance?*

The tramp of the approaching cohort already sounds on the ear, and Simon steps forth alone with his challenge: "Any two of your best!" The Roman soldier, glorying in nothing but feats of arms, is not without admiration for the brave,—not without his code of honor. The brave Israelite shall have his chance. One at a time, and not two, shall meet him.

One, and still another, and yet a third goes down before the sword of Simon; but spent and bleeding from a dozen wounds, he can do no more. Turning one last look upon the shining mass of the Temple that looms on the heighth of Moriah, brilliant and beautiful as a vision of the new Jerusalem, he bares his breast to the gladiatorial stroke, and breathes out in his dying breath the ancient war-cry of the Maccabee. At the same time his brothers and comrades, lighter armed and more active than the Romans, have made a run for the gate, and though some were cut off and killed, Menahem and Eleazer, Barabbas, Judas and Ehud escape into the city, and though closely pursued are soon lost among the narrow lanes and dark passages of the Tyropean.

XXV

THE DESERT

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.”—LUKE i, 80.

It were well for the reader to recall here the picture of the Holy Land, as it stands revealed either to his memory as a traveler or to his reading.

A land of mountains and hills, of valleys and fertile plains, hemmed in on the south and east by barren deserts. He will remember that between the arable land and the desert there is generally no sharp line of division, but that gradually, as the traveler passes southward or eastward, the soil becomes more sandy and sterile, the vegetation more scant and insignificant, and the face of the country more level and monotonous, till at last all ends in the vast rolling expanse of sun-burned, shifting sands that stretch away in frightful solitude to the Persian Gulf and the river Euphrates.

It will be remembered that on the east those water courses that in winter pour their torrents into the Jordan and the Dead Sea have their utmost source in wadies which, in gradually diminishing width and depth, spread out and extend like the tentacles of a vast polypus to the borders of the most arid wastes. These wadies, beginning in a mere depression or hollow, may grow gradually wider and deeper as they extend westward towards the Jordan or the Dead Sea, or they may break suddenly off into frightful chasms, with perpendicular walls of rock inaccessible even to the fox or the wild goat. For some distance bordering the desert, they are for the greater part of the year entirely waterless, and often even in the rainy season they are not visited by a shower. It is the land spoken of by

the prophet, "The land of deserts and pits, the land of drouth and of the shadow of death,—a land that no man passeth through, and where no man dwelleth."

It is now late afternoon, and the red sun hangs like a great glowing coal above the mountains of Gilead, that from here show only as a low bank of blue in the distant west. Eastward and southward the desert sands stretch away in bare and lifeless expanse to the horizon. A deep wady here has its source,—at first a mere hollow between slight elevations, it rapidly widens and deepens till within a mile from where we stand it has grown to be a canyon, with bare rocky walls where even the hyssop and the acacia find no rooting. On the open plain there are some vestiges of vegetation, some tufts of sun-burned camel's grass, some withered acacias, and a few dwarfish cacti. Few signs of animal life are there, on earth or in air. The cony of the rocks has withdrawn to greener fields, and one solitary vulture, at vast height, is fanning the thin air towards far-off Mecca and the caravan.

As the sun dips his edge below the horizon, two men appear coming in from the desert, each bearing on his shoulder a large bag or sack filled with locusts, the result of the day's toil. As they draw near, we recognize them as our old acquaintances, Jesus of Nazareth and John of Hebron. Their dress is much the same as when we last saw them, only now quite old and worn, and patched here and there with stout cloth of camel's hair that sometimes has made the rent worse. The dust of the desert, mingled with sweat, has begrimed their faces and hands and all the exposed parts of their bodies, and turned hair and beards to a reddish gray.

Their steps are directed towards the wady. Both men seem to be tired, bent beneath their burdens. At the point where the shallow channel breaks off into a deep and precipitous gorge, they set down their loads and prepare by various readjustments of fastenings for the perilous descent

into the wady. While so employed, Jesus discovers on a small cactus growing on the edge of the chasm, a little pale, pink flower. With pleased expression he stoops to examine it critically and calls the attention of John to it, but John, with set face and preoccupied air, only glances toward it, and is not impressed

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The path of the ascetic, as of the drunkard and of every other human creature who departs from the simple, clear, and easy way of Nature, is ever a tangent that leads constantly farther and farther from the central truth, till it is lost in chaotic wilds wherein no man can dwell.

It had been so with Addi. The improved conditions brought about in the cave and all its surroundings by the fine, artistic taste and industry of Jesus, instead of endearing it to Addi and making it more sacred and precious to him as a home, had aroused in him a morbid sense of unworthiness and impropriety. There were deep questions of life and death, of angels and spirits, of the soul and immortality, that were less and less clear to him, and he believed that it was because his mind was too much diverted by pleasures of sense. The bed of leaves and grass that Jesus had prevailed on him to use instead of the bare ground, the enhanced beauty of the grove, trimmed and trained by Jesus' hand, the improved quality of fruit and flower, were all devices of the Devil to draw his mind away from Scripture study, and to darken and obscure his vision of the mystical Babylon and the New Jerusalem.

And so Addi, with John still a faithful disciple, had removed from one place to another, ever going farther and farther from the haunts of men and deeper into the desert wilds, till at last he had taken up his abode on this last outpost of all cosmic things, amidst splintered bare rocks and utter desolation.

Here Addi had died; and John for a long time had remained here alone. Then Jesus came; and so it is that

we find Jesus and John together here. The cave that they inhabit at the bottom of the wady is very small, and bare of every convenience of civilized life; but it is under the south wall, and there is a widening of the gorge at this point, so that the sun at noon shines down opposite the opening of their cave and is mirrored in the small, rock-hewn basin of water on the other side. A stream of water no larger than a spear of grass issues from a minute crevice and is caught in a small basin rudely shaped in the rock by some ancient cave-dweller and used, as necessity or superstition impelled, by unnumbered generations of men, Troglodites, Anthropophagi, ancient Accadians, and sons of Anak. Their bare feet in ten thousand years have worn hollows in the rock where the path leads down from the desert plain.

The wild Ishmaelites of the desert know well the spot, and often the herdsmen of Aretas come long distances on their camels to drink of the pure waters of the wady and to talk with the mysterious strangers of the cave.

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It is midday on the desert, and at the cave; and the fierce heat of a vertical sun has baked even the desert sand to a crust, so that it flakes and crackles under our tread like the hot scoria of a volcano. The stunted acacias that we saw languishing at the edge of the wady seem now entirely dead, and even the hardy cacti, smothered in desert dust, show no sign of life. In the deep recesses of the wady, too, the air, unstirred by any breeze, is close and stifling, like that of an oven. Jesus and John, as usual at this hour, have repeated together the eighteen Benedictions and are now seated in the shade of the rocks opposite their cave.

The water supplied by the spring, scant as it is, and poured on bare rocks, makes a little vegetation possible. Some industrious tenant of long ago has brought soil from a far-away tell or wady, and planted a vine and a fig tree

below the spring. The tree, twisted and gnarled and scorched by the droughts of a thousand years, still twines its roots about the splintered crags, and to-day is filled with blossoms and fruit. An orchid also, brought here by Jesus from the earlier haunt and now gorgeous in bloom, hangs by a crevice in the wall and fills the air with delicate perfume. The vine has been torn out and destroyed by John; its luscious clusters, like those of Hebron and Engedi, which the Nazarite was forbidden to touch, had offered a too insidious and perpetual temptation, and the stern ascetic had found his only safety in plucking it up root and branch for the saving of his soul.

The shadow of the rock reaches scarcely beyond the feet of the men, and out in the blistering sunlight spreads a bare rock before their cave. While we look, on this rock appears a small, golden-yellow lizard. Jesus observed it first, and called the attention of John to it. "How beautiful it is," he said, "how rich in color, how delicately formed, and how graceful in all its movements. Beautiful little creature! And God made it!"

While Jesus spoke, a large scorpion, of horrid aspect, rushed from a crevice in the rock and attempted to seize the lizard for its prey. But the lizard, dropping its tail, fled just in time to escape, leaving its tail, however, to be greedily devoured by the poisonous monster. John, who had witnessed it all, took up a stone and was about to kill the scorpion, when Jesus interposed. "Don't kill it," he said. "If it frightens our poor lizard so it breaks off its tail, it also destroys noxious worms and insects. I know that at the grove of Addi, I used to see the scorpions hunting for those insects that were so harmful to our orange trees. Probably they do more good than injury. I think a great deal of what we used to hear so much among the Essenes, that the command of Moses, 'Thou shalt not kill,' really means all it says."

"Yes," answered John, "we learned many things of

Father Menahem and Chicoba that are worth thinking about. I never kill any innocent thing; but these horrid scorpions! If we don't kill them, they may kill us; and then the Essenes kill scorpions and hurtful insects, as you know."

"Yes, I know, and probably it must be so under present conditions; but I am always thinking of that wonderful passage in Isaiah. There will come a time, he says, when the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den; for they shall not hurt nor destroy. The wolf, he says, shall dwell with the lamb, and the lion eat straw like an ox. Now these, as we know, are true sayings, and must come to pass, but when and how? We all believe,—the Essenes as well as you and I,—that not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Menahem taught this, as did Addi, and Hillel, and Shammai; but they all differ so greatly as to what the fulfillment is to be.

"You and I, like most other Jews, were brought up in the doctrine that the Messiah, now at hand, is to be a great king like David, a man of war who shall kill and destroy the heathen and establish his kingdom with, as it is said, an outstretched hand and a strong arm, even in anger and fury and in great wrath, as is taught by Jeremiah. At the same time, we have seen that the Essenes, who profess to be more straightly followers of Moses than we, or even Addi or Gamaliel, reject all kinds of war or bloodshed, and believe the Messiah will be a man of Peace."

By this the scorpion, having finished his meal of the lizard's tail, scrambled awkwardly across the rock and came close to Jesus' bare feet. John, made uneasy by the apparent danger, again offered to crush the creature with a stone, but Jesus restrained him. "It won't hurt *me*," he said, and putting out his hand, allowed the reptile to feel his finger with its claws, and at last to crawl into his open palm. John watched the process with shuddering

horror; but Jesus lifted the animal to his knees, where it quietly went to sleep on his hand.

“ ‘They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain,’ saith the Lord,” Jesus repeated absently. Then, turning to John, he went on: “The old prophets must have had in view the coming of a time, such as they describe, a time when every man, as Adam in Eden, shall be fearless and free; when all men, like Adam, shall have dominion over the creatures; the sun shall not smite by day, nor the moon by night; there will no more be servant or master, no more hunger or nakedness, no hatreds or revilings,—a time when men shall beat their swords into plowshares, their spears into pruning hooks, and when nations shall learn war no more.

“No Jew of any sect or party but believes that such a time is predicted and will come. We differ only in the means. All agree that repentance and righteousness are necessary. As the wise Rabbi has said, ‘If Israel should repent, even but for one hour, the Messiah would appear;’ but what is it to repent and live righteously? You and Addi and all the swarm of Nazarites and hermits that infest the mountains and caves of the wilderness believe that righteousness consists in solitary study, self-denials, and mortifications. The Essenes are at bottom the same, though broader and more liberal. They admit the community and association, many of them observe the command to increase and multiply; but they live hard and joyless lives, far, very far, from what life should be.

“The Pharisees, too, believe that they have discovered the perfect way: to fast and pray and tithe, to wash the hands, to pour out the blood of lambs and sheep and goats at the foot of the altar, to make broad their phylacteries, and to enlarge the borders of their garments. Such is their way of righteousness: they say that if all would do even as they, the Messiah would come. Jacobus and his Zealots, on the other hand, believing as we all do in Moses

and the Law, make little of tithes and hand-washings and phylacteries. They believe down in their hearts in joyous lives; they would return to the simplicity and the equality of the days of Samuel, of Samson and Deborah. They would make righteousness to consist of justice and judgment and mercy. They would require of each according to his ability and give to each according to his need. Truly, as it seems to me, a noble doctrine, only I fear they would enforce their doctrine with fire and sword. They would drive a dagger to the heart even of a brother who is recreant.

“It is true, we have talked all this over many, many times; but we must continue to talk it over till we decide what is the true way,—what is the will of God, and, above all, what *we are to do*.” Jesus paused and waited, but John not answering, he went on: “I, as you know, have been strangely drawn towards Jacobus and the Zealots. Their aim and object, the restoration of Israel to its ancient simplicity and purity, so that every man may sit under his own vine and fig tree, with his wife and children about him, care-free and unafraid, seems to me the noblest object for which men can work. It is no wonder that I came so near to joining them, no wonder that the noblest youth of our land and all generous and aspiring souls are drawn to them as the hope of Israel. But somehow since my experience with them at Og’s cave in Bashan, I cannot go with them. Good cannot come out of evil. War and bloodshed cannot bring peace and joy. Somehow it seems to me that those who take the sword must also be subject to the sword, and in the end must *perish* by the sword; and I can not believe in war any more at all.

“It may be that this is because I was so shocked by the scenes at Og’s cave, and I may get over it, but so it seems to me now. Then the Essenes and Pharisees are also out of the question. Their methods can never return Israel to Paradise, and that brings me back to you and your idea

that Israel should repent, and every one for himself begin a new life of righteousness and service. You remember that when we last talked, my objection to this was that example should go with precept. The Scribes and Pharisees at Jerusalem teach by word of mouth what all men regard as true; but their teaching is as barren as the east wind. No man regards them, *because they preach one thing and do another.*

“Now may not the final result be the same with you? True repentance and remission of sins is good, and perhaps necessary; but what then? What effect is repentance to have upon life? He who calls on men to repent and live righteously is himself a hermit and lives in the desert, cut off from human kind. Is this the life that repentance requires? You say no, truly, but you act differently, and example, I am sure, is more powerful than any words. Men, if they follow you, will incline to your way of life, and I am satisfied, after long trial, that such is not the true way. Such lives as those of Addi and Banus and others like them, and of the Essenes, holy lives truly; but what do they effect? Their good, I fear, dies with them, and so, I fear, will yours.

“Come, then, with me to Nazareth and the abodes of men. Begin there to proclaim what you have studied out and discovered in solitude. The time surely is ripe. Men everywhere are looking for and expecting the coming of the Messiah. There are thousands of different opinions about the signs and manner of his coming, but they will all unite upon one who speaks positively and with authority. Even if, as is said, Elias must first come, who knows but the spirit of Elias may be in you? God can do greater things than this. And you remember what Esli told us of the Buddhist belief about the souls of men passing into other bodies. Some of our most learned Rabbis believe in such things, too, and Esli, you know, said that the heathen are now looking for a Messiah or Saviour of the

world, just as we are. And it is Israel's Messiah, for there can be no other; and God has revealed even to the heathen a knowledge of his coming."

John sat with his head between his hands, and looked straight before him; but yet he did not answer, and Jesus continued.

"Your preparation for this work has been long and sufficient. You are already known to many in Galilee. Your disciples have spread abroad a knowledge of your holy life and of what you teach. You are known to be a priest by birth; already some call you a prophet. Jacobus and they that are with him look upon you much in the same way. Then besides, you, different from me, are perfectly clear in your own mind. Your father taught you from infancy that the coming of the Messiah, predicted by the prophets of old, was then at hand. All our Rabbis, both Pharisee and Sadducee, believe the same, and Addi and Banus and the Essenes are of like mind. You all have been looking constantly and praying now these many years for the coming of the Messiah; and yet at the same time you all say that the Messiah will never come till Israel repents. Now if this be true, if Israel must first repent, surely the thing to do is to *try* by every means to *cause* Israel to repent. You were set apart from your birth, like Samuel, to the service of the Lord, and it may well be that you *are* called of God; and the call of God may no man resist. But it is time for me to be going, so I will say no more."

John put down his hands and looked at Jesus with an intentness that was almost painful. "The call of God, may no man resist," John repeated, with an air of rapt absorption. Then, after a pause, he went on with clear decisiveness.

"No, I cannot go with you to Galilee. I cannot change my habit of life. I lose my clearness and my freedom in cities and in the abodes of men; but I will before long come

near to Jordan, and be in my old place at Bethabara. There I can live my own life and still be in touch with the people. Perhaps I am over persuaded by you in this; but if so, it will be shown us in due time.

“I cannot get over the feeling that it is you, rather than I, who should take up this work. These years of solitary study and self-examination would be vain if they had not taught me self-knowledge, if they had not given me a true measure of myself and of you. You I have known from childhood, I have studied you, and compared you with all the men I have known, and I cannot be wrong in believing you, above all others, fitted for this work. You have a tone of voice, a presence, a manner, that fixes and commands attention, and gives authority to what you say. You remember how old Menahem was impressed, and prophesied of you, when, as young lads, we wandered away to the Essenes, twenty years ago; and Addi, when dying, called for you again and again, and with his last breath murmured prophetic words concerning you that seemed to mean that you would be a messenger of God to Israel. I am willing to bear my part, and do all I can; but it should be as your helper and follower, and not as your leader.”

It was Jesus' turn to be absorbed and silent, and for a time his eyes were dreamy and vacant. “You and I,” he said at length, “have been friends from childhood, and it is due that I make a clean breast of it, and tell you just why I refuse at present to go forward in any public work. The truth is, I am not clear in my own mind where the true way lies, and until I am it is useless, and even wrong, to take any definite stand. I want to be sure I am right, and when I am,—when I am free from doubt,—I shall not shrink. Your idea of repentance and good works may be all that is needed; it is certainly good, as far as it goes. Your absolute faith in it lends it authority and power. Your light is a true light, even if it be not the

whole light, and you have no right to keep it to yourself or to hide it under a bushel. If God has given you a light to lighten the world, you are bound to put it on a candlestick that it may shine into the dark. My light, if I have any, still smoulders and smokes: it has not yet burst into flame."

Absorbed in these thoughts, the two men had forgotten the scorpion, which still lay asleep, and Jesus unconsciously partly closing his hand, the reptile, aroused on the instant fierce and bristling, lashed its tail and inflicted a wound on Jesus' hand. Jesus calmly shook it off, and John, regardless of remonstrance, crushed it with a stone.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," John repeated solemnly,—then added, "There is more in that, perhaps, than we think."

XXVI

TARICHEA

"The disciples may have had business connections here, since the place was the great central depot for selling and preparing the fish for export."—EDERSHEIM.

It is time to make a new survey. Old landmarks become wasted and disappear, and new ones take their place. Old trees are cut down, and new ones spring up.

Twenty years have past since our story began. The old have died, the young have grown aged. Children have become mature. CHANGE is written on the sky above every terrestrial scene. To the eye of faith and aspiration it is the Bow of Promise; to the eye of the sick and worn-out worldling, the rich, the great, the proud, it is the fire-cloud above the volcano, the awful threat and signal of conflagration and ruin.

Revolutions, both political and religious, have been at work in the world for ages. More properly it may be said, revolutions, like winds and waves and tides, and heat and cold, are always at work. They move at first as slowly and imperceptibly as the glacier, then at last as swiftly as the avalanche. Revolution in the political world had begun with Hannibal and the Scipios, and so in the religious world, with King Asoka of India and his Buddhist propaganda. It is said that the missionaries of Asoka penetrated to China and Japan on the east, and westward to Greece, Italy, and Egypt.

We speak in common parlance of political and religious revolutions. If, however, we delve deep down to the roots of things, we shall find that both are one. The main tap-root, to which all others are joined and are tributary, is Religion. As a man in the inmost heart of him *believes*

about God and his own soul, so *is* he. As manners maketh the superficial, outward man, so Religion maketh the inward spiritual man; and as the man is spiritually, so is he in all ways.

Carlyle has figured "the stern Avatur of Democracy beginning its world-thrilling birth and battle song" so late as A. D. 1776, and gives it two centuries to make circuit of the earth. We may well enough allow that the young giant was then born; but he was conceived in the long, long ago, and gestation here, as with all great things, has been slow, very slow.

Democracy was conceived when the great Hebrew Law-giver decreed the Jubilee Year, and proclaimed: "Thus saith the Lord, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" Modern Democracy had *its* origin in a revival of Religion, in Puritanism, the Puritanism of John Knox and the Covenanters. It has never flourished except as a Religion, and all inferences and analogies point but one way: It never will flourish otherwise. When John Baptist came preaching in the Wilderness of Judea, it was a revival of Religion, but also of Democracy,—and Democracy of so radical a type as to be regarded by the rich and the great, the rulers and the priests, even of that day as rank socialism. "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise," was his cry. And it was the poor and the lowly, even as Jesus said, "the publicans and harlots," who believed him, while the Scribes and Pharisees turned away. Last but not least, John Baptist was beheaded and Jesus crucified, not for their religion, but for their politics,—a very significant fact.

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But to return to our narrative. Many changes, as we were remarking, had taken place since the beginning of our story.

Father Joazer and the Rabbi Sadduc are both dead,

At the humble fisherman's cottage in Bethsaida, where Joazer and his father before him had lived and died amid their boats and nets, our old acquaintance Zebedee now resides with his family, consisting of his wife Salome and two sons, James and John,—young men now, and learned in all the arts of the fisher's craft. They are associated with others in the business, with old Jonas and his two sons, Simon and Andrew, and with Philip, a near friend.

This Bethsaida is a suburb of Capernaum, and the name being interpreted, as the learned tell us, is really Fisherton. It is a village made up of fishermen and their families. Capernaum, a city of wealth and elegance, does not allow fishermen to reside within its precincts. The dirt and slime and fishy smells of their calling are confined to their own quarter of Bethsaida.

The business of fishing has been growing worse,—less and less remunerative in these late years. The great merchants and dealers, like Hippo, with their exclusive rights and monopolies bought of their rulers, have drawn the lines gradually tighter, till the poor fishermen are little more than bondsmen to the rich monger who controls the entire sale. An effort has been made to unite all the fishermen of Galilee in a bond or guild against the merchants, but it has availed little. The poverty, destitution, and squalor of Fisherton and of all the fishermen's villages along the lake shore have grown worse rather than better.

At Tarichea, or Pickling Town, a village of considerable size south of Capernaum, Hippo has established a great fish-curing plant, and by new and improved, or at least labor-saving, methods has nearly extinguished the old home industry; and so now the greater part of the fish caught in the lake are unloaded at Hippo's wharfs at Tarichea.

Armed with a letter of introduction from the Roman Governor of Tiberias, we will make bold to call upon Hippo at his office near the wharf. Here we see many busy clerks with pale, sickly faces, leaning over their

books, with reed pens. The tall Israelite who seems to be the head man informs us that Hippo is not yet in. His office hours, he says, are from the fourth to the sixth, and again from the tenth to the twelfth; and so, as it is still early, we will go down upon the wharf to see the unloading and weighing of last night's catch. There are perhaps one hundred boats waiting, some of them loaded to their utmost capacity with a variety of fish, and others with only a mere handful of small herrings to show for their all-night's labor. There is no wind and the lake is still, and the motionless boats lie closely packed against the great stone pier, while the men and boys of the fleet lounge in groups on the wharf or lie asleep in the sun, stretched on the nets piled on the sterns of their boats. They are a rough, hairy, almost savage-looking set of men, such indeed as fishermen seem always to have been, and such as we may see to-day in the coast villages of Newfoundland and Chesapeake Bay. A few are unloading their fish at the door of the great warehouse, where the fish are sorted and weighed; but it is a slow process, and the greater part have to wait.

At the far end of the wharf, where it spreads out into a large platform, there are quite a number of persons congregated. Several of the fishermen have here unloaded their nets, and are looking them over and mending them while waiting. One of these we at once recognize as our old acquaintance Zebedee. He is now a grizzled, middle-aged man, and with him helping mend the nets is another elderly man, whom Zebedee addresses as Jonas. There are four or five young fellows, some of them still in their teens, who help overhaul the nets while the older men do the mending.

And now, approaching from across the lake, eastward, appears a small boat, propelled by oars. There are two persons in it; and while it is yet some distance away, Simon declares that the two persons are Jesus and Jacobus. "You

can tell Jacobus by his size, and Jesus,—I don't know just how I can tell him, but it's he,—I'll bet my amulet against a copper gerah."

The announcement of Simon arouses considerable interest on the wharf, and all eyes are at once fixed on the approaching craft. Soon it is near enough to confirm Simon's surmise, and a crowd at once gathers at the end of the wharf to receive the visitors. A strange silence falls as Jesus and Jacobus come up out of their boat. The young men have suddenly become attentive; the old men have laid aside their work, and the most indolent loungee is aroused and interested. There are no hand-shakings or embracings, but Zebedee and Jonas, with other old men, return the visitors' salutation of "Peace be with thee," by profound obeisance and a return of "Peace." Then all stand silent waiting for Jesus to speak.

"I think all of you know, or at least have seen, the Nazarite, John of Hebron. You know his holy life and his love for Israel. When he abode at Bethabara beyond Jordan, many of you went out to see him and to hear him show forth the things that are shortly to appear. Some of you are already his disciples. For some time past I have been with John on the extreme borders of the desert, beyond Ramoth Gilead. Ere long he purposeth to come again to his old place at Bethabara, and will then teach more boldly and openly than in times past. I have urged him to this course, as has also Jacobus, who was with him for a season, and we have promised him to stir up the people to go out and listen to him. That John is a true messenger of God both Jacobus and I believe. He is that prophet spoken of by Esaias, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.' Heretofore, through all his life, John has been so intently looking for the coming of that prophet who is to prepare the way for the Messiah that he has not thought of himself as that prophet. He

can hardly believe it yet, and refuses to be ranked with the prophets of old. What the design of God is in all this, we do not yet know. The wisest of our Rabbis are not agreed except in this, that the times spoken of by the ancient prophets are surely at hand, that the Messiah will shortly appear, and that all things will be changed."

Jesus paused and looked around, and before he could commence again Jonas called out, saying, "Rabbi, what thinkest thou; will the Messiah be a king and a man of war like David, or a Judge like Samuel?"

"Call me not Rabbi, friend Jonas," answered Jesus, simply. "I believe with Jacobus that one only is our master, even God. The Scribes and Pharisees at Jerusalem are called of men Rabbi, and I am not as they. Let us think of all men as brethren. As to thy question about the Messiah, I cannot answer it. We only know that he will be the friend of the poor and the lowly, for it is written concerning him, 'He will save the afflicted people, and will bring down high looks; he will heal the broken hearted, and set at liberty them that are bruised.'"

"Jacobus has told us that the Messiah will be a man of war, who will destroy the heathen as grasshoppers, and so doth thy brother Jude," answered Jonas. "What doth John of Hebron teach?"

"John of Hebron is silent about all this," answered Jesus. "It has been the subject of great searchings of heart with John, as with us all, but he says that this is one of the things that God has kept back from men and angels. We certainly know only that the Messiah will redeem Israel; by what means and in what way no man will know till the Messiah himself appears."

While Jesus was speaking a patrol of a dozen Roman soldiers appeared at the other end of the wharf and began making their tour of inspection. At the same moment, a peculiar warning cry sounded along the wharf. Jesus ceased speaking and turned to Jacobus, who sat

screened by a pile of baled merchandise. The giant at once rose to his feet and scanned the approaching patrol, their arms and armor and all their brave attire flashing and glittering in the sun, with a lofty glance of hatred and contempt.

"You will have to go," said Jesus, putting a firm hand on the mighty bare arm of Jacobus. "Think what ruin resistance would bring to these poor fishermen and their families."

"No! Let me alone!" answered Jacobus, fiercely. "How can a son of Judas fly from such a handful of hirelings? Make way, and I will give their flesh to the fish of the sea and to the fowls of the air."

"Thou hast found my counsel good in times past," answered Jesus. "Trust me now in this. Go, and go quickly," and Jesus almost forcibly pushed Jacobus towards the boat, and when he was entered pushed the boat off.

By this, the soldiers had got sight of Jacobus' well-known form, and hailed him with threatenings and vile language. Then they seized an empty fishing boat and prepared for pursuit. Meantime Jacobus, with his face to the foe, rowed slowly away, and when he had gained a hundred yards or more in the offing, he ceased rowing and stood up; then it was perceived that he was armed with a sling and stones.

A moment he poised himself on his unstable footing. Then with a swift whirl of his right arm he sent a stone from his sling that struck the leading Roman on the head, crushing through helm and bone like a bolt from a balista. Another and another stone followed in quick succession, and with unerring aim. Three Romans were laid low, and the rest, appalled by an attack so sudden and resistless, abandoned the boat and precipitously sought shelter behind the bales of merchandise. When Jacobus saw his enemies thus discomfited, he raised his hand towards

heaven, and his great voice rolled and echoed back from tower and crag and rocky shore: "Mi camochah baclim Jehovah." (Who like thee among the gods, Jehovah!) This old Maccabean war-cry, known to every Jew and sounded with such power, aroused Pickling Town like a cry of fire.

Men, women, and children rush into the streets and towards the water's edge, gesticulating and clamoring, and even the dull, tired clerks in Hippo's great warehouse throng to windows and doorways, eager to know the reason for the great war-cry. But Jacobus does not heed, and taking again the oars, he rows rapidly away towards the wild land of Gadara and the eastern shore.

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Twenty years ago Hippo went to his business riding a mule or an ass, or even on foot. Now he has grown so fat and clumsy he never walks, but rides in a wheeled car that sustains a couch, with canopy, on which he reclines. By connivance with the authorities he has succeeded in getting a special tax levied, an octroi, at Capernaum, at Tarichea, and at other towns, for making a smooth, paved way from Tiberias, where he lives, to Tarichea, where the main branch of his business is. This road is also convenient for Honorius, Nicias, and other wealthy gentlemen of leisure who reside at Tiberias. They have made it a place of fashionable resort in late afternoons, and its use has been forbidden for ox-carts and pack animals.

We are in waiting outside when Hippo comes up. Two lackeys assist him to descend, and then we present our letter. Hippo glances at it long enough to get its import, and with smiling courtesy bids us welcome. "I shall deem it an honor," he says, "to show you gentlemen through my warehouses, and to give you any information I can. But you will excuse me one moment."

Then with a countenance changed to harsh and cruel

sternness, he turns to the half dozen servants in waiting, who all at once cast themselves on their knees, with faces to the ground, at his feet. One only, apparently the head servant and a Zidonian, remains upright on his knees, and to him Hippo speaks. "This dog of a Jew," he says, pointing to one of the groveling forms at his feet, "has grown lazy and worthless. Give him forty lashes, and see it be done thoroughly."

We noticed the man when he came up as an attendant upon Hippo, a sallow, weak, emaciated figure, staggering under an overload of bales and bundles. Now he raises himself upon his knees, and with hands crossed upon his breast, with streaming eyes, and an agonized face, cries out, "Oh! have mercy, my master! have mercy! If I stumbled and burst the wine bottle, it was because I was sick and weak. My wife and child lie dying with fever; and now many nights I have been with them watching, and by day working for my lord. Oh! scourge me not! but kill me rather, and let there be an end."

To us, there is the pathos of truth in the man's appeal; but Hippo is unmoved, and charging the Zidonian to execute his order, turns again to us smiling, and leads the way up the polished marble steps to his elegant and luxurious sanctum. "They are all such liars and thieves," he murmurs, "I don't wonder the old Spartans had to kill them off occasionally, and the Romans feed them to the fish in their ponds. One grows weary of dealing with such brutes."

The large, high-vaulted room into which we are ushered is furnished, ornamented, and adorned with a costliness and magnificence that astonishes us. There are rare marble vases and statuary, and rich divans sufficient to accommodate a considerable company.

Refreshments of rare old wines, honey cakes, and preserves of figs are brought by a female slave, and at once

the sociable Grecian spirit of our host blossoms out into a charming geniality and friendliness that will explain to us Hippo's great popularity with Antipas and his set.

Our pleasant conversation is interrupted at first by screams, as of agony, coming up from subterranean regions some distance away, and Hippo, pausing a moment to listen, interjects the remark that his orders are being executed. We had indicated that the object of our visit was to make some inquiries about business conditions and social questions, and Hippo, apparently glad of an opportunity to express his views, went on with great volubility: "It is true, as you say, there is no doubt much dissatisfaction among the people; there always was, and always will be, no matter how well they are off,—and Antipas thinks there are evidences of deep-laid schemes of sedition and rebellion. He sees a sword of Damocles hanging over him continually in the vague unrest of the people, and especially in their wild fanaticism about what they call a Messiah, a King, as I understand it, to be sent by God, who is to abolish and put aside all existing laws and government, and with these miserable Jews as lords over all to rule the world. Ha! Ha! Honorius and I laugh at Antipas for his ridiculous fears, but he still insists that there is trouble brewing; so he has his spies out everywhere, and they have smelled out what Antipas thinks may be some fearsome thing, in a miserable, naked starveling of a Jew called John of Hebron, who lives alone in some sort of wild beast den in the desert, for the most part, but has disciples,—and comes sometimes himself among the slaves and fishermen and lowest class of people here in Galilee. Then there is one Jesus, a carpenter, who is said to be a leading disciple of this John. And all are connected, Antipas thinks, with the Zealots and the sons of that arch conspirator and robber, Judas the Gaulonite.

"This affair on the wharf here this morning,—three soldiers killed by that giant Jacobus,—will give Antipas

fresh grounds of fear; but it ought not. This Jacobus is only a robber, and has no following to speak of. The fishermen and shepherds of the mountains give him shelter and sustenance, but it is only blackmail. Jacobus and his band do not prey upon them, and they pay for the exemption in friendly offices."

We inquired about the fishermen and their condition, and of the business situation in the country generally. Hippo poured a fresh glass of Falernian and went on.

"Taking a broad view of these matters you speak of, there is no question among well informed men but that general conditions are everywhere improving. The dominion of Rome has been cruel and crushing, in a sense; and the extinction of nationalities, as with Greece and the Jews, has borne hard on national pride and prejudice. But upon the whole it has been highly beneficent. It has broadened men's lives by extending the field of their activity. Trade and commerce have been immensely stimulated and enlarged. The diverse elements (once warring and discordant) that compose the world are now mingled in peaceful intercourse. Where there were once a hundred petty states, ignorant of each other, jealous, envious, and warring, there is now one all-embracing *State*, with the will and the authority to break down artificial walls of separation, to secure tranquillity, and to afford protection. Before Cæsar's time, no ship could sail the waters of the Great Sea without paying tribute to pirates. Traveling abroad, either by sea or land, was dangerous to liberty and even life. A man out of his own country was in constant peril of being robbed of his possessions and of being sold into slavery. Now all this is changed. There is protection everywhere; the central principle of Imperialism extends into all departments, into all the activities of life. The master minds of the world have scope and latitude; their field, no longer a city or a province, is the Empire,—and see what is being accomplished.

“Captains of industry, by system and organization, are multiplying the products of labor, which Merchant Princes are distributing for the good of all the world. The aimless or ill-directed labor of the brutish mass is receiving intelligent control and direction. Saramalla, the Jew of Antioch, gives employment to thousands. So with Alexander, the Arabarch of Alexandria, Sanballat of Damascus, and many others I could name. They give employment to thousands of the poor,—directing their labor and adding greatly to its efficiency. Some of them already, as Alexander of Alexandria and Saramalla of Antioch, are the richest men in the world. They lend money to kings. They are the truly Great Ones of earth. Even the greatest warriors must yield to them. Cæsar himself was a tributary of Crassus,—dependent upon his wealth.”

Here Hippo paused a moment to take a sip of wine, and we hastened to interpose the inquiry for which we had specially come. We desired information about Hippo's own business and the condition of those engaged under him. We had been informed that there was great poverty and suffering and much discontent among the fishermen; also, that the product of Hippo's establishment was less wholesome than formerly, when the fish were cured at home in the fishermen's families. This we told Hippo as delicately as we could, but it seemed to excite him unaccountably. Fat and heavy as he was, he rose to his feet and waddled back and forth while he talked in a high key and with great animation.

“All that is a slander gotten up by those vile Zealots,” he asserted, growing more red in the face and shaking his fist, “and I tell *you* what I have told Antipas a hundred times, that these fishermen are about the only Zealots, they and the slaves and starveling shepherds and grubbers, who own nothing and have nothing at stake. They imagine they were better off in some far-away legendary time, when the lazy do-nothings could sit in the shade and have their

bellies filled, as they tell about, with milk and honey. Milk and honey," repeated Hippo, with great scorn, "it shows the low and groveling nature of these Zealots, that their ideal of happiness and prosperity is so low. They would abolish all great cities, all theaters and games, destroy all paintings and works of art, and living, as they say, each under his own vine and fig tree, be content, like mere sheep in rich pastures. They would not have even a king of their own choosing, but, as I am informed, have got the silly notion that all men are equal and should live together like brothers. Now you can see that men with such insane notions as these are certain to have wrong ideas about everything. They don't know when they are well off. Now let me tell you all about it.

"When I came here, thirty-five or forty years ago, the fish business was in the most confused and disorganized condition imaginable. There was no order or system. Each fisherman took care of and marketed his own catch, that is, he and his family,—for wife and children were as much engaged in the general business as the man himself. The fish were cured and prepared for market in every household, and by methods as old as Hercules or Saturn, for aught any one knows. Then the marketing was done in the same loose way. With an ass's load apiece, a half dozen of these starveling fishermen, sometimes with their wives and even whole families, would start out for Damascus or Jerusalem; and to sell that ass's load of fish they would be gone a week, two weeks, or even a month,—they didn't care how long: they had no regard for time. They took along their flutes, guitars, or tambourines, and stopping, maybe for days, by wells of water in pleasant shady places or perhaps at some grove on a hill top, where was a shrine or Mazar, as they call it, they prayed and made offerings and sang and danced and ate their barley bread and drank their sour wine, and made a regular picnic of it.

“Now it is easy to see that under such a system it took three or four times as many people to carry on the business as was necessary; there was a great waste of time and labor. I saw this, and with a permit from Herod, who was then King, and for which you may know I paid a round sum, I established a general market and curing establishment, first in Capernaum and afterwards here. And now see what I have accomplished. By organization, improved methods, and by making the business an *industry* instead of a pastime, I have doubled the product of the fisheries, while at the same time diminishing the numbers engaged in it,—thereby releasing many men and their families to engage in other productive employments.

“I have introduced great improvements in the curing of fish, so that now all this work, or nearly all, has been taken away from the household and concentrated in my establishment here. I must show you through my works before you leave, and let you see what intelligent control and supervision have accomplished. We cure the fish in half the time it took formerly, and we put it on the market in far more attractive form. By an arrangement with the great dealers in Tyre, Sidon, and other cities of the seacoast, the price is regulated in a way to secure justice and stability. As to the condition of the fishermen and their families, if there is poverty and suffering it is their own fault. Those who obstinately refuse to accept the changed conditions and still strive to carry on their business in the old way are, of course, losers. They are the victims of their own folly and deserve to suffer. The contention that fish cured by my new process is not as wholesome as that prepared in households in the old way, is preposterous. The ingredients used by me, in addition to salt, are a secret known only to a few men in the world, and is carefully guarded. These ingredients are not, as is asserted, at all harmful when used properly and in the small quantities required. I have myself eaten of fish so cured, and in the

presence of my servants and others, to show that there is nothing harmful in it."

Of course there were some questions suggested by Hippo's discourse; but we felt that they were likely to be embarrassing and did not present them. On the contrary, almost involuntarily, and following the custom in such cases, we found ourselves expressing satisfaction with Hippo's account, and wondering why the fishermen should be so discontented.

"Wonder!" exclaimed Hippo, almost shouting, "you needn't wonder! I tell you, these Hebrews are the most perverse, stubborn, obstinate, and ungrateful race of creatures that the gods ever permitted to exist on this earth,—permitted to exist, I say, for no god ever had anything to do with their making. They were vomited up from Tartarus, for even Pluto couldn't stand them, and threw them out. After all I have done for them they are ready to take my life, and it is the same with Antipas, and with Pilate at Jerusalem. The country was never so well governed and never so prosperous as it is to-day. See what Antipas has done at Tiberias and Sepphoris, and Pilate and other Roman Governors at Jerusalem and elsewhere; and yet these accursed Zealots find nothing in it all but cause of complaint. And it is a fact that the protection Rome extends to the life and liberty of these miserable creatures is what gives them most offense. If it were not for Roman soldiers at Jerusalem on feast days, these wild fanatics would be butchering each other about the very altar of their god. They have attempted it often and often. I have heard Pilate say so myself. Now what can be done with such animals!"

We had been informed that Hippo's head-steward and most of his chief servants were Jews, and we asked him if it were true. "Yes," he said, "it is true; and a strange thing it is, too. But I find it is so everywhere; even at Tyre and in Rome Jews are everywhere sought as chief

clerks in business houses. And it must be admitted, strange as it may appear, that they are really more honest and trustworthy than any other class of men. The head of the great firm of Hamilcan at Tyre once told me that without Jewish stewards and superintendents they couldn't do business and would have to retire."

XXVII

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN

“And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.”
—JOHN I, 37.

In accordance with his promise to Jesus, we find John in his old haunt near the Sea of Galilee, on the upper Jordan.

From vague dreaming and rhapsody, he has suddenly awakened to an awful reality and a clear, decisive plan of action. The words of Jesus, “If Israel must first repent, surely the thing to do is to *try*, by every means, to *cause* Israel to repent,” had suddenly given form and substance in John’s mind to all the formless visions and passionate longings of a lifetime. It was so plain, so simple, he wondered why he had never thought of it before; and now, with a faith-like sight, he believed that God, in the time and place foreordained from the creation of the world, had revealed it to him, for the salvation of Israel. He it was who was called of God to *cause* Israel to repent and to prepare the way for the new Kingdom of Heaven.

John has been living at this place now for some days, and there is already gathered unto him a considerable company of eager and enthusiastic men of Galilee. They are all of the same class as those whom Jacobus and his emissaries have already filled with discontent and wild notions of liberty and equality.

As in all times and cases, it is those who suffer that are discontented, and who seek a change. The rich, the great, the powerful, are satisfied with things as they are. They deride reform as the vice of the idle and profligate. Every reformer from Noah to John Brown hath a Devil. Among this company gathered about John we see many

that are more or less known to us. There are the two brothers of Jesus, James and Jude, Clopas, Zebedee, and Jonas, with their sons, also their friends Philip and Nathaniel, with two sons of Judas, brothers of Jacobus. Even the implacable Ehud, having gained from rumor a confused notion that John is an enemy of Rome, is come to satisfy himself and learn if there is anything to be hoped for in this new voice in the wilderness.

To all these simple souls gathered about John, the desire, the want, the suffering in each individual were the measure and the motive of the expectation. Then, as now, where there was no suffering, there was no want, no desire, and no real hope. *Then, as now, and ever, suffering was the parent of faith and of action; ease, the parent of doubt and atheism and the harbinger of death.*

This gathering about John is an altogether informal affair. Like Addi and the Essenes, with whom he has long been associated, John continues here his three daily ablutions, and calls upon all who are near to join with him in repeating at the stated times the Shema and the Benedictions. These, with secret prayer and Scripture study, take up much of his time.

The indulgent, easy-going crowd (this being a Sabbatic year) lounge for the most part in the shade, eating their black bread and drinking their sour wine, and discussing — alas! we are sorry to say — not so much religion as politics. Many, indeed, have already come and gone; a few well-to-do shopkeepers and tradesmen, officials and rulers of synagogues, the “Bathanim” or men of leisure, drawn by curiosity, have come and looked and, without waiting to hear, have gone away. To them this wild, hairy, skin-clad man of the desert is but a demented visionary,— a reed shaken by the wind. They have no desire to hear him. To those who do stay to hear, John talks in the informal Eastern fashion, sitting on a stone and answering questions, for the most part, of men sitting on

the ground, or coming in groups to ask a question and then going away again to discuss and reason about it by themselves.

As we join the group about John, we hear Jonas asking, "You say that Israel must repent before the Messiah can come, and yet the good Rabbi Sadduc, I remember, once told us,—and that was many years ago,—that the Messiah was here then."

"And he told you true," answers John. "The Messiah has been long in waiting in mountains and caves and desert places; he has watched and waited, sorrowing and weeping alone, and praying that Israel might repent." Then raising his hand, and gazing fixedly towards the mountains and the rocky gorge, he continued solemnly, "He is here now. He knows our thoughts and listens to our words."

Every eye is at once turned towards the dark and cavernous abyss of the canyon near which they are, and every heart almost ceases to beat in expectation. A wandering wind sighs through the leaves of the great oak overhead, and moans down the wild gorge with almost a human plaint. Surely, as the holy men have said, the Messiah is here. There was a moment of breathless silence. Men looked into one another's eyes, and read there the reflection of their own thoughts. Then suddenly the young man Simon, whom we know, started up and exclaimed passionately, "O Master, I for one will do as thou biddest. What wilt thou have me to do?"

To whom John answered, "Repent! Repent! And like a proselyte newly entering Israel's fold, thou shouldst be baptized."

"I do repent," cried Simon, "and I will be baptized, as thou sayest, and not only baptized but plunged into and covered with water, for I am a sinful man."

John at once arose, and taking Simon by the hand, led the way to the water, and was followed by the whole con-

course of people. At the water's edge Simon threw off his fisher's coat, his one only garment, and entered the water naked, where, with little help from John, he was plunged beneath the waters. The example of Simon was instantly contagious, and one after another the whole company was immersed, as Simon had been,—the young men naked, like him, and the older men, who generally wore a coarse inner garment, threw off only their coats of skin. John offered to baptize any who wished in the old way of pouring or sprinkling, but all, fired with Simon's generous enthusiasm, declared for a complete plunge.

And so, without plan or premeditation, was inaugurated the Baptism of John. Before he was through with the baptism, in the mind of John this impulsive demand of Simon's to be *plunged* in water had taken shape as a sign and token of the will of God. It should be henceforth the mark of distinction between the chaff and the wheat, between those who were to live and reign with the Messiah and those who were to be destroyed. And so he now proclaimed it; and to this little band of fishermen and shepherds he gave in charge the spreading abroad of the New Evangel: "Repent and be baptized, that ye may escape the wrath to come."

That day John chose twelve of the young men, one for each tribe of Israel, to be, as he said, "Disciples." Among them were Simon and Andrew and the two brothers of Jesus, James and Jude.

XXVIII

AT THE FOUNTAIN OF NAZARETH

"It is the one spring of the town, and hence must have been that which the mothers and daughters of Christ's day frequented."

—GEIKIE.

It is the time of evening, and we are again at Nazareth of Galilee. It is the hour when the women and maidens go out to the fountain on the hillside to get their supply of water for next day's use. If we go there, we shall learn more of the news of the day,—more of what is going on than we would even at the wine shops or gambling dens, where only men congregate. Here at the fountain the women, in leisurely Eastern fashion, pause long to gossip and exchange news. There have been strange happenings of late, and there is much to talk about.

There is quite a group of women about the fountain, some filling their jars, and some with jars already filled but waiting to hear and to tell the latest news. Two, who have not stayed to talk and are just going away as we come up, seem familiar to us, and we scan them more closely. Yes, they are Mary and Doris, Jesus' mother and sister. Their faces are wan and sad, and their clothing very coarse and worn. They return the greetings of acquaintances with scant courtesy, and as soon as their jars are filled they put them on their shoulders and hasten away.

"Poor things," exclaims Zibiah, the wife of Sariphia, the wine merchant, "pride and poverty go not well together."

"If the widow of Joseph would accept help from those able and willing to help her, she and Doris need not go about so shame-faced and shabby."

“Yes, and do you not know that her son Jesus is home now, and glad and even anxious to help her, only she doesn’t want him to do a thing because it is Sabbath Year, and she says she had rather starve than have Jesus work.” This last from Athaliah, the wife of Shaphan, the Scribe. “Of course,” she continues, “that is right for those who can afford it; but people must live. The Amhaartz and all slaves must work. How could we live otherwise? My husband says that it was never intended that *none* should work,—only the Bathanim” (men of leisure).

Judith, the wife of the Chazzan, who had been listening impatiently, here broke in. “Oh! But I can tell you the whole thing about that,” she said. “You know our house is next to theirs, and only a wall separates our gardens. Of course I never listen or pry into my neighbor’s affairs, but I can’t help hearing a good deal. When Jesus came home, you may know things were just dreadful there,—just about as bad as could be. Jude never would work, and he was off with the Zealots or Essenes most of the time anyway, and James, his brother, with his Essenism and taking care of his own family, had about all he could do; and so, with tithes and taxes and all, it had come to a pretty sharp pass with Mary and Doris. Their garden wall had fallen, and the garden itself was grown up to weeds and briars. The next morning after Jesus got home, I heard him out there, slashing away at the briars before it was fairly daylight; and then pretty soon I saw Mary stealing along out to him, with a face so white and pitiful,—you know what a taking way she has when she tries! And she stole softly up to Jesus as he worked, and put her hand on his shoulder. He turned, and they looked each other in the eyes; then Jesus put his arm around Mary and drew her to him and kissed her on the forehead. Then they sat down on the seat under their old fig tree, and Doris came out, and they talked a long time.

"I couldn't hear all that was said, but I caught enough to know that Jesus believes that he ought to work enough to keep them from beggary or starvation, even if it is Sabbatic Year; and I notice that Jesus has continued to work, and has their garden in fine order now,—though Mary still thinks it wrong, and says it has never been so before in her family. What pride! Just to think of it! As Zibiah says, 'Pride and poverty go not well together,' and the Scripture says, 'Pride goeth before a fall.'"

By this, the whole group of women, dropping other subjects, have gathered about the chief speakers. One, a young woman of great beauty and a manner singularly sweet and attractive, appears particularly interested. She does not speak or intrude in any way, but it requires only to see those large, lustrous, passionate eyes fixed on the speakers in utter self-effacement to know that hers is no common interest. The incident does not escape the experienced eyes of the elder women, Zibiah and Athaliah, and exchanging knowing glances, Zibiah inquires innocently, "What do you think of the story that Jesus is about to get married?"

"Oh, that may very well be," answered Athaliah. "There is no doubt but Simon, the Pharisee, would gladly have him take his Jerusha and be his son-in-law; and there are enough others, I'm thinking, who believe Jesus will be a great Rabbi some day, and would like to be related to him. Even Jairus, ruler of the synagogue at Capernaum, is said to have made advances to Jesus for his oldest daughter, Hadesh."

"Now what idle tales!" broke in Judith, with some excitement. "Is it reasonable to suppose that those rich men and rulers you speak of are going to give their daughters to a poor carpenter who doesn't even stick to his trade, but goes wandering about, nobody knows where, a great part of the time? They're not such fools."

Athaliah and Zibiah looked at each other and smiled, and Athaliah answered, "Well, I opine there be plenty of such fools, for all that; Jesus will, no doubt, cease wandering about when he gets a wife, and with a rich father-in-law he could go to Jerusalem and become a great Rabbi."

"Well, you are welcome to your opinion," retorted Judith, almost angrily. "But it seems to me if Jesus gets a good honest wife among more common people, he may count himself lucky." Then turning to Susanna, whose absorbed attention was so apparent, Judith changed her tone, and went on very sweet and smiling. "Perhaps we ought not to talk so freely about Jesus in the presence of Susanna, the subject seems so painful to her. I beg your pardon, Susanna. We will talk of something else."

Susanna, startled as if from a reverie, fixed her eyes as if in pained surprise upon the speaker, and then, without a word and drawing her wimple about her face, turned and walked slowly away.

"Why, the girl has gone and left her water-pot," exclaimed one, then called more loudly, "Susanna! Susanna-a! You have forgotten your water-pot!" But Susanna did not turn or pause, and went straight on.

"Now that was too cruel of you, Judith," said Zibiah, with some show of reproof. "How could you do it?"

"Do what? How was I to know that the silly girl was going to be hurt by what I said? But my husband will be waiting, and I must go." And Judith, taking up her water-pot, stalked proudly away.

"What a mean, cruel thing that was for Judith to say to Susanna," said Zibiah, as soon as Judith was out of hearing.

"Well, you know, of course, what the matter is with her," answered Athaliah.

"I don't care, it doesn't excuse her," returned Zibiah. "And for her to think that her poor little Hushim could

get Jesus for a husband, when he doesn't seem to care for the finest maidens in Nazareth, neither Susanna nor anyone else."

"No, Jesus, will never marry, I doubt," answered Athaliah. "They say he is still thinking of Mary of Magdala,—though that seems entirely impossible, for she has gone wholly to the bad, as everyone knows. And then, besides, they say that Jesus will never be a real Rabbi. He knows enough, no doubt. My husband says he is equal in knowledge of the Law to Hillel or Shammai, but that he has such queer notions he can never be received in Jerusalem as a Rabbi. He is friendly to the Zealots, and they say he has lived with the Essenes at Engedi, when he has been off so long."

"Yes, and now," broke in another, "his cousin John the Hermit is teaching a new doctrine at Bethabara, and they say that Jesus is one of his disciples, with both his brothers and all his cousins and uncles."

Another woman, who had not yet spoken, here interrupted. "Yes, and John the Hermit they are now calling John the Baptist, for they say he is baptizing everybody in a new way,—plunging them all under water, head, neck, and heels; and *that*, he says, washes away all their sins and saves them from a terrible destruction which he asserts is now close at hand. My husband and I and a lot of people from our street are going out to-morrow to see what it is all about. We hear they are going from Cana and Capernaum and everywhere."

"Let them go, the more fools they," cried Athaliah. "But then this is Sabbatic Year, and idle people must have something to amuse them. Only look out you don't get snared. My husband says that this John is really a Zealot, like Jacobus and his father before him, and will surely be snatched up sooner or later by Antipas or the Romans, and all who have anything to do with him will suffer. Every little while some such fool adventurer starts

up with some wild scheme, like old Ezekias and Judas the Gaulonite and Simon and Athronges and his brothers, and they all have miserably perished; and so will it be with this John. Better keep away from him and be satisfied to live on in the good old way."

Further conversation is here cut short by the approach of a tumultuous crowd of swearing, singing, shouting men and boys, with camels, mules, asses, and horses, coming for a supply of water. They belong to the caravan from Tyre and Sidon that is camped for the night on the plain above, where there is no water. The women, drawing their wimples close about their faces, seize their water-pots and go hastily away. We are glad to see one, who had not spoken, take up the full jar left by Susanna and carry it along with her own. "Poor girl, she will be scolded for not bringing it," she murmured, "and I will take it to her."

XXIX

TO HEAR JOHN

“Caravans of men and beasts covered the roads of Galilee and Judea and the plain of Jordan.”—JOSEPHUS.

It was Spring-time when John began his ministry. It is now Autumn; and the waters of upper Jordan are dried up, so that baptism by immersion can no longer be performed there. So John has removed first to Enon and afterwards to lower Jordan, the only place where a sufficient depth of water can be found. It has been a period of great activity for John. Into these few months have been crowded the labors of a lifetime. As with Him who was to come after, and whose shoes John felt himself unworthy to unloose, the stored-up result of long years of solitary wrestle with the great problems of life was to blossom in an hour, and *leave fruit to ripen slowly in the growing light of all the ages.*

Until the excitement had become so great and the movement so universal as to become national and to endanger the very institutions by which they lived and grew, the rich and great, the priests and professional gentlemen, held aloof. But already there had been danger signals abroad, indications that this movement, if allowed to proceed, would abridge ancient privileges, lessen the respect paid to wealth and position, and, above all, *reduce the revenues!*

Such results were surely indicated in the diminished attendance at the stated feasts at Jerusalem. The Feast in July, when the wood for Temple service was contributed, had shown a falling off, and now but lately, at the Feast of Trumpets, or New Year, one of the three most solemn festivals of the Jewish year, there had been an alarming

decline. The money and gifts flowing into Jerusalem to enrich the priesthood and officials was greatly reduced. These disturbing conditions were first observed by the Temple priesthood and officials, by whom the loss was most felt. They called the attention of Caiaphas to it and recommended active measures, but Caiaphas and the higher priesthood were so sunk in luxury and sloth that they were slow to move.

Old Annas alone, the father-in-law to the weak and procrastinating Caiaphas, was fully alive to the occasion, and capable of energetic action. Annas, a former High-Priest, a man of immense wealth and with influence at Rome, belonged to a former generation. A Sadducee of the Sadducees, his religion was no more than a Hebraized Pantheism. But his morals were founded on sound philosophy, and to old age he had preserved the force and energy that made him, though old and without office, the leading and controlling spirit in sacerdotal affairs in Jerusalem. He was still the virtual High-Priest. And about him began now to form that secret cabal which was so cruelly to cut short the career of John, and a year later on Calvary to give what seemed the finishing blow to the great Democratic uprising in Israel.

Annas, as one of the few who had access to Pilate, had at first attempted to engage that vigilant ruler in a hostile movement, and Pilate, as a measure of precaution, had sent Varus in disguise to take notes of John's preachings and learn its real design and tendency. Varus' report had wholly satisfied Pilate, and no arts of Annas could move him to interfere. Besides, Procula, Pilate's wife, had spent her girlhood in Galilee, and was a somewhat intelligent interpreter of social and religious movements which had their origin outside of Jerusalem. With Antipas Annas had been more successful: his representations had aroused in that weak and superstitious ruler the darkest suspicions. His agents were constantly on the watch, and

there was now no day but spies from Tiberias as well as from Jerusalem were in attendance on the preaching of John. Under John's vehement harangues the whole of Palestine, from Hebron to farthest Lebanon, became disrupted and in motion. Caravans of people of all ages, sexes, and conditions filled every highway and bypath. There were Priests and Levites, criminals and prostitutes, Sadducees and Zealots, the friends of Rome as well as its enemies, the skin-clad herdsmen of Bashan and the decked and gilded nabobs of Jerusalem.

Pilate and his Romans alone remained calm and indifferent. It is indeed an evidence, very marked and almost conclusive, of the judicial spirit of Roman rule, that Pilate did not interfere. Few Governments in any age or country would have remained quiescent and neutral in presence of such a universal ferment and excitement. It remained for the weaker, more jealous and suspicious Tetrarch, who feared that his hold upon power was endangered, to cut short a career which, if allowed to attain its natural growth and ends, would no doubt have changed the character of world history. While John lived and wrought, it was John and not Jesus whose spirit and doctrines were giving form, color, and direction to a movement which neither Jesus nor John originated or truly interpreted, and which was to be limited only by earthly bounds and the end of Time.

The day chosen for our visit to John happens to be one of special interest. Although it is October, the fall rains have not begun, and the weather is very warm. Indeed, this narrow Jordan valley, a thousand feet lower than the Sea, is in summer as hot as an oven, and is now as dry as a desert. Jordan itself has shrunk to a brook, and the usually rich, tropical vegetation of the valley has drooped and faded. Even the tall oleanders and reeds along the banks look sear, and their leaves are laden with dust. The trampling of hundreds of thousands of men

and beasts have ground the dry earth into powder, which now, at the slightest movement, rises in stifling clouds, to settle, a grimy covering, on everything.

It is afternoon when we arrive, and the vast concourse of people that fills the valley is resting in comparative quiet. Tents and awnings are spread everywhere, and under them the people are gathered in groups, earnestly discussing what they have heard in the forenoon, and at other times, from the lips of John. It is a slow and difficult task to make our way through the crowd. There is no system or order,—no streets or open ways,—and we have to pick our way, rubbing here and there against a tethered mule or ass or camel, and stepping over the feet or outstretched legs of recumbent pilgrims. Coming out at last on a small open space near some huge, spreading, evergreen oaks, we find ourselves facing very different conditions. There is no crowding here, but ample room, with ease, comfort, and luxury. Even the sleek and well-fed animals have plenty of room. Under the shade of the trees are spread rich pavilions, gorgeous in color, with tents and awnings of silk and damask, and close at hand a table loaded with viands and surrounded with luxurious divans, on which recline, in indolent ease, a company of Scribes and Pharisees, lawyers and doctors from Jerusalem. A little farther along, and within the shade of the same clump of trees, we find another group, separated indeed from the first as unclean, but mingling sociably in after-dinner good fellowship. With the first group are no women, but with the second are more women than men. Our old acquaintances are here: Honorius and Hippo, with Zozimus and Nicias and others; with them are Lamia, Glaphyra, Galla, and—who is this other female, decked and jeweled so gaudily, and reclining voluptuously on the divan? Is it the Mary we knew, Mary of Magdala? There are the same deep, inscrutable eyes, the abundant dark hair, the pearly teeth and noble brow, but alas! how

changed! From the eyes down, on face and lip and limb, appear through all the paint and rouge and toilet arts the unmistakable marks of the wine-bibber. There are the puffed cheeks, thick, swollen lips, and heavy limbs of the debauchee.

The downward road for Mary, as for all high souls when once they have let go their ideals, has been steep and the descent swift. The slippery scarp of the loftiest peaks hangs ever perilous above most frightful abysses. Mary has become hateful even to these hardened votaries of Bacchus and of Venus with whom she associates. They, early imbued with the artful philosophy of Epicurus, have a supreme contempt for any loss of self-control, and Mary's abandonment has become offensive even to Honorius. It is talked among his associates, especially the women, that he tolerates Mary now only because he is dominated by her forceful personality and termagant temper.

There are stories of frightful quarrels, and even of assaults by Mary with drawn dagger. That livid scar on Honorius' neck, it is said, came of a wound given by Mary. From the first, and through all, Mary has felt herself a stranger in this environment: it has been foreign and unnatural to her. Though plunging in every dissipation, and excelling all in the graces as well as the vices, she has been looked upon more as a minister than as a companion.

That sage philosopher of Arden, of which our Shakespeare is witness, made curious note of a universal truth in his observations on a dial.

"Thus we may see how the world wags,
'Tis but an hour since it was nine,
And after one hour more 'twill be eleven;
And so from hour to hour we ripe and ripe,
And then from hour to hour we rot and rot,
And thereby hangs a tale."

Martin Luther apostrophized the Supreme Pontiff, Clement VII, saying, "O Peter, thou poor fisherman! How hast thou become master of Rome, and so many kingdoms besides! I bid thee all hail! Peter, King of Sicily! Fisherman of Bethsaida." He might with equal aptitude have gone considerably back of the fisherman Peter. John of Hebron, a wild, hairy man, nearly naked, living on locusts and wild honey, sitting on a splintered rock at the mouth of his cave in the desert and discoursing to a few shaggy, skin-clad peasants, had told them sternly, "Stop quarreling and fighting. Be good to one another. If one of you lacks anything, a garment, or food, or anything that you have, divide with him. Live together like brother men and not like wild beasts. Repent of your self-seeking, revengeful past, and begin again on a better plan."

This was the beginning of the Christian religion, the seed germ from which has sprung all that may be rightly classed under that name. And so, even at the time of which we write, there had been growth: luxury and love of ease, had begun to creep in. John, with calls and duties pressing upon him, has not been able to gather and preserve his usual supply of locusts and wild honey, and is obliged, therefore, to receive of his admiring disciples a portion of their black barley bread and garlic. His conscience upbraids him for indulging in such luxury, but there seems no help for it. His friend Jesus comforts him with the assurance that the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment. He should even protect his health by a cloak in wintry rains. So also, John's pulpit or rostrum, from the rough rock in the cave's mouth, had advanced to an elevated platform of rude joiner's work and rough boards.

To this platform we may now see John making his way. He has not changed his manner of dress, and is escorted by a considerable company of Disciples, all wear-

ing the same camel's hair shirt, with raw-leather girdle, and letting their hair grow long. These clear the way for John, while one of their number, a stalwart shepherd, marches in advance, blowing a mighty blast on a huge ram's horn. We may notice that all these, with John himself, wear not only the prescribed phylacteries on arm and brow, but also suspend from their square camel's-hair loin cloths the sacred blue and white fringes prescribed by Moses. And now John has climbed to his pulpit, and the services are about to begin.

It is a wonderful and impressive scene, and one not to be witnessed again on this earth. Crowding about the pulpit of John are fifty thousand people, mostly Jews of the poorer sort, who look upon John as truly a prophet of God, perhaps even Elijah himself. Quite near the stand, and in front, we see the before-mentioned Scribes, Pharisees, Lawyers, and others from Jerusalem, and beside them, separated only by a small space, are our friends from Tiberias, Honorius, Hippo, and their company. The crowd, accustomed to subservience, has yielded place to them, though not without some ominous growls of incipient rebellion. Easy seats and divans have been spread for them by their servants and slaves where they cannot only see and hear, but ask questions, and even argue points of doctrine with the preacher.

But John, as yet, notices none of these things. As he goes through the crowd, he looks neither to the right nor left, and now, when he has mounted to the platform, with head thrown back and eyes elevated, he raises his right hand towards heaven, and for a moment prays silently. The people, even the Scribes and Pharisees, all standing, bow their heads, and, like John, pray silently. Following the silent prayer, John repeats aloud, and alone, the usual synagogue prayer of adoration, beginning "Blessed be Thou, by whose word the world was created." He then takes up a roll of the prophets, as if to read;

and now, apparently for the first time, he becomes aware of his audience and his eyes sweep over it with an eagle glance that nothing escapes. Those eyes of John may well enough give him the name of Prophet, Holy Man, or even Elijah. They are eyes that seem to pierce into the very depths of men's souls. Black as jet, deep set under beetling brows, they burn and glow like coals of fire. Well enough may his Disciples say of him that his eyes shoot forth lightnings like the clouds.

After keenly surveying the vast concourse, where the people for the most part stand or sit on the ground, his eyes rest a moment on the rich and luxurious equipments of the Scribes and Pharisees, and of Honorius and Hippo. The face of the austere anchorite takes on, if possible, a sterner, grimmer aspect, and surely enough there are lightnings in his glance; but he does not speak. He lays down the roll of the Law that he had taken in his hand, and instead of reading or speaking, recites the three first chapters of Isaiah. His voice, though not high-keyed or strained, may be heard by the slaves and lepers on the farthest outskirts, and every word and syllable is uttered clear and distinct.

During the recitation, John looks at no one; but with head elevated and eyes fixed as if upon the distant and unseen, he rolls forth those awful denunciations with rapt intensity, as if he were himself the mouthpiece of the Most High. As he proceeds, a feeling of awe creeps over the whole congregation, and there is breathless silence. These awful threatenings of the great Prophet of Israel are familiar to every Jew, but now for the first time, under John's passionate and powerful rendering, they have point and meaning that strikes home.

At last, when the silence has become painful under John's stern and steadfast gaze, he raises his hand and, sweeping it over the crowd, cries out, in a voice of thunder, "These words of Isaiah, O men of Israel, are addressed

to *you!* THEY MEAN ISRAEL TO-DAY!" Then, raising both hands and looking up to heaven, he cries, "Hear, O heavens. Give ear, O earth! For the Lord hath spoken. 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. They have gone away backwards, and provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger!'"

Then lowering his hands, and addressing the people again in a tone and manner of tenderest love and entreaty, he says, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers: how have ye been betrayed. Ye are as sheep whose shepherds have led ye away from green fields and pleasant pastures, and sold ye to thieves and robbers in the wilderness." Then again elevating his voice, he cried aloud, "Ye are as Israel in the days of Achan, and in the days of the sons of Eli, and of Korah the Levite. The accursed thing is among you, and God saith to you this day, as he spoke by the mouth of Moses and Aaron in their day, 'Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.'"

At this a voice close by interrupted the speaker, by crying out in a loud and commanding tone, "Hold! I adjure thee, in the name of the Living God." At the same time a man in priestly robes, of imposing figure and presence, arose among the distinguished company of Jerusalemites, and addressed John with a lofty and imperious air: "In the name of the anointed, the holy and righteous High Priest Caiaphas, I demand of thee, John of Hebron,—if such be thy name,—by what authority sayest thou these things? It is known to thee, as to every Israelite here present, that to teach or preach in Israel without being duly ordained and commissioned by the laying on of hands is unlawful. Thou hast never been ordained. Whence, then, thy authority?"

During this speech the burning eyes of John were fixed

on the speaker with such stern reproof that the man, tough and hardened worldling as he was, could not meet them, and had to let his eyes wander over the crowd, which he seemed to be more addressing than John. It was a moment of breathless interest. The word of a Priest and Rabbi from Jerusalem all had been taught to regard as of more authority than even the words of Moses and the Law. What could this rude, untaught Nazarite of the desert answer to this acknowledged axiom of the Law in the mouth of an accredited messenger of the High Priest?

But John, nothing daunted and with eyes fixed on the priest, cried out in a terrible voice: "Go back to the master who sent thee, and tell him that I speak by authority of the Almighty God. Tell him I am he of whom the prophet Esaias spoke, 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness, saying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"

"Every prophet, as Ezekiel, cries, 'Woe be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves, that do eat the fat and cloth themselves with the wool, kill them that are fed, and feed not the flock.' And who are these false shepherds of Israel? Doth not the prophet Micah tell us that the princes, the heads and priests of Israel, build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity, and Malachi, doth he not say of you priests and Levites, masters and scholars, that you have oppressed the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, turned aside the stranger from his right, and covered the altar of the Lord with tears and with weeping. 'Will a man rob God?' he crieth, 'yet ye have robbed Him.' Therefore, as sayeth the prophet Micah, 'shall Zion, for your sake, be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps?' So read, and tell the master who sent you so to read."

John paused and looked around. The priest, his questioner, had sunk down on his divan, with an air of haughty disgust, and there was a great silence. Then John, stretch-

ing forth his hands, cried again in a loud voice, "O lost sheep of the house of Israel! Behold, thy Redeemer cometh! To *you* are all the promises, and in you are they now to be fulfilled. The time appointed of old is now fully come. THE MESSIAH IS HERE. His footsteps are on the mountains. The sound of his chariot-wheels are on the plain. He is the Lord's anointed, clothed in majesty and honor and power, and he will execute judgment. To the proud in heart, the extortioner, the oppressor of the hireling, and the widow, the fatherless, and the poor, he will be a condemning judge and a consuming fire. If I baptize with water those of you who repent and turn from your evil ways, those of you whom I baptize not, and who do not repent, he will baptize with fire. His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor. He will burn up the chaff and gather the wheat into his garner."

The Rabbi Boethus, who, not daring to appear in public with the uncircumcised, was with the company from Jerusalem, here arose and asked of John, saying, "The promises of God, as recorded in the Law, are to *all* the seed of Abraham, and how sayest thou that the Messiah will be to many a condemning judge and a consuming fire? How readest thou?"

"Thou whited wall!" answered John, turning upon the priest his sternest look, "Thinkest thou that because thou hast Abraham to thy father, thou shalt escape the condemnation of hell? Behold of these stones, lying thick as autumn leaves, God can raise up children unto Abraham. Think not thus to escape the wrath to come. 'Woe unto them,' saith Isaiah, 'that join house to house, that lay field to field.' Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and have the harp and the viol, the tabret and the pipe, and wine in their feasts. Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil. Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as

dust. Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against His people and He has stretched forth His hand against them and will smite them, and the hills will tremble and their carcasses will be torn in the midst of the streets. And for all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

This rhapsody of John has been delivered with a manner so exalted and lifted up, so rapt and intense, that his excitable and demonstrative audience has been wrought to a high pitch. Thousands are on their knees or prostrate on their faces, praying, and on every hand are tears and groans and cries.

When John and his disciples first appeared, Mary, among the company of Honorius, was more disposed to scoff and deride than even the Romans and Greeks. She had created a laugh by the utterance of piquant sarcasms on the outlandish appearance of John and his disciples. "This," she said, "promises to be a better show than the circus at Antioch. Antipas and Herodias don't know how much they are losing by not being here. How Salome would enjoy dancing before these mummers."

But when John began to speak, Mary's attention, like all others, was instantly riveted upon him. It had been long since Mary had read or heard the words of the Sacred Book, and though familiar with the words used by John, until she heard them now from his lips they had not impressed her. Now, however, with her Jewish training and ancestry of a thousand years, the voice of John was to her like a trump of doom. It was also a far sounding echo from the beautiful, far-away days of childhood: what memories did they bring up, and what regrets.

The little white-washed cottage at Magdala by the sea, the great spreading vine with its clustered fruit over the door, the small boat on the beach, the sun rising over the distant mountains,—how vividly it all came back to her! Then there was the tender and loving father, dead now

from grief and shame, it was said, for *her sins!* HER SINS! How his love and care came back to her, and how, an innocent child, standing at his knee with his arm about her, she had listened while he read again and again, those words of the Great Prophet of Israel! Was it all a dream?

Mary has ceased to listen to the words of the preacher; his voice has passed to an indistinct murmur, and again the scene is changed. Mary is a girl on the green hills of Galilee. Around her are the bending lilies, the simple sheep, the frisking lambs, and the mild-eyed gazelle. Oh, for one breath of that pure, sweet air, one hour of that dear, calm life of innocent joy! Yes, and there is one other last and deepest pang. She has shut it out with gaiety and mirth, even with wildest orgies of dissipation, drowned it in wine and covered it with the trappings of wealth and power and pride; but now again, as if evoked by the conjuring words of John, it flames in upon her like a glare of blinding light. She has already come to see and know that her place in the company of Honorius is only for the hour. She will be thrown into the street like a worn garment, she knows not when. She knows that she is envied and feared and hated rather than loved, and her heart is so famished and starving for one drop of true love, such love as that of her father, or no,—she dare not name him, that noble and beautiful youth, whose love she seemingly might have had but had thrown away. Mary buries her face in the cushions of her divan, while sobs shake her frame and inquiring glances pass from eye to eye. The lips of the haughty Glaphyra curl in scorn while she seeks the eye of Honorius. What does it all mean? And now again the words of the preacher sound with trumpet tones in Mary's ears. He is repeating the words of Jeremiah: “‘And when thou art spoiled what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, and deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with

painting: in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers will despise thee; they will seek thy life.' ”

Mary sits up and gazes wildly around. The abundance of her tears has furrowed and marred the paint on her cheeks, and the black pencilings of her eyes and brows have spread over her face in black blotches, which, with her drawn and agonized countenance, give her a terrible appearance. Glaphyra and the rest gaze upon her in fear and amazement.

And now the voice of the multitude rises like a sea. Thousands are crying “Hosanna! Glory be to God!” and many are tearing the ornaments from their necks and ears and casting them away. Mary can do no less: she will do more. She will go to the extreme in this, as in all else. She throws off not only the gold and gems from neck and arms and hair, but she tears off the rich and costly outer garments with which she is clothed, and trampling them beneath her feet, stands forth bereft of all her finery, and clothed only in the dark mantle of her unbound hair and two inner garments. And behold, these garments are not those of a Roman or of a Greek, but of a Jew. To one of them is attached the blue and white fringe of the sacred Tallith, a mark of devotion which Mary has clung to through all her devious career, and which still marks her as a daughter of Abraham.

It is early morning of the day following the events last related, and we are on the banks of Jordan, at the pool. It is the time when the proselytes are baptized and admitted into the new communion. For the last few days the numbers demanding baptism have grown so great that John no longer does the work of immersion himself, but, remaining on the shore, examines and questions those making application, and passes those he deems fit on to his disciples, who, standing in the water, perform the rite and pronounce the words of blessing.

Many are turned away by John, some as being Levitically unclean, and others because they fail to show proper evidence of repentance. One rich lawyer of Jerusalem, on being refused because he has made no restitution of his ill-gotten gains, attempts, after the manner of his kind, to set up an argument to prove that John has no right to discriminate. But John makes short work of the lawyer's logic and tells him that no man, however great, is worthy of the Kingdom, who will not only repent but make good, as far as possible, his past wrong-doing. He tells the lawyer that not Antipas himself, if he asked it on his knees, could be admitted to baptism until he had put away Herodias.

And now among those pressing for baptism comes the figure of a woman. She is closely veiled and clothed in a coarse garment of the poorest sort. Her bowed head, trembling steps, and voice of pleading, attract John's attention at once. His stern heart is touched, and he listens to her outpouring of confession and contrition with kindling love. But, alas! She is *unclean*, UNCLEAN. John baptizes none but the clean.* She must go away to a priest and offer the gift required by Moses, then come and be baptized. John speaks kindly but firmly, and the woman shrinks away and is lost in the crowd.

One standing near says it is Mary of Magdala.

* See Geikie's "Life of Christ," Chap. xxv.

XXX

THE BLACK SHEEP

“And Jesus’ mother and brethren urged him vehemently to go to the baptism of John for the forgiveness of his sins.”—Gospel of the Nazarenes.

It is the beginning of what is known in history as the Hard Times of A. D. 33. It is a Sabbatic year, and work is unlawful. Fields remain unplowed, and orchards and vineyards unpruned and untended. There is great suffering and extreme discontent.*

The announcement by John that sure and complete relief is at hand is received by the people with perfect faith. He has become the idol of the multitude; he is a prophet of God; he is Elijah; to many he is even Messiah. He denies being any of these, but he comforts the people with the assurance that there is One at hand who will be all these, and more. Well may the “Law and Order” doctors and officials fear to deny this John! The people, half frenzied with wrongs and sufferings, are watching them jealously. They are watching all men jealously; even so staunch a Democrat as Jesus has become suspect, and is regarded by some with black looks.

In Nazareth and the region round about, except Jesus and the official class, Scribes, Pharisees, and some rich Sadducees, there is no child of Abraham who has not been to John’s baptism. And besides, to the great grief of his mother and sister, Jesus silently ignores all their protestations and continues to work, cultivating their garden and their little patch of ground in the valley, almost as if it were not a Sabbatic year. He tells them it is better to work than to beg or to starve. Then his public talks, when

* See Edersheim’s “Jewish Social Life.”

he does speak,—as he still does some times on the Sabbath,—are so queer and unintelligible. His great learning and charm of manner still command for him the place of Sheliach in the Synagogue, but he says nothing about John, and discourses wholly in such strange and obscure parables that the wise old Bathanim shake their heads and wag their gray beards, at the same time hardly daring to question lest they betray their own ignorance.

Amidst the universal ferment, the turmoil and excitement, the running hither and thither, Jesus alone remains apparently calm and unmoved. The work that he deems it necessary for him to perform, he does as far as possible secretly and out of sight: he would offend no one's sense of duty or religious obligation. He is not yet himself clear in his mind where the true path lies. He has no intimates, not even companions. All who have been in any way near to him have gone away after John. Even his mother and sister have caught the sweeping contagion and, like all their Jewish neighbors, ceasing to work and abandoning domestic affairs, spend most of their time in going and coming in response to the call of John.

And so Jesus spends his time in solitude. Often he wanders away to the hills and sheep pastures above Nazareth, and spends days and nights there alone, with no roof over his head but the blue arch of the sky, fretted with stars. On returning home after one of these absences he found quite a company of his relatives assembled and awaiting him. His mother and brothers and sisters, with other near friends, were come together after a visit to John, to urge Jesus to go and accept the new doctrine and be baptized. It was a little embarrassing to those making this effort. Jesus' dignity and elevation of character, together with his great learning, made it appear rather presumptuous to obtrude advice upon him in such a matter. But a martyr-like sense of duty in Mary prevailed over every other consideration, and besides there still lurked in her

heart the mother's fond ambition to see this most loved son taking that high place in Israel which she thought belonged to him.

Now that his becoming a great Rabbi at Jerusalem was no longer to be thought of, Mary's ambition had suddenly taken a new form and direction. John was own cousin to Jesus; and why, in the new Kingdom of God that was at hand, should not her Jesus find a high place, and act the great part for which he was so well qualified.

Mary approached the subject delicately, and told Jesus how much he was missed at Enon and how every one inquired why he did not come out. "Your uncle Zebedee," she said, "and cousin Jonas, and many others, expressed great surprise at your holding back this way, and they all said that you might be next to John himself if you would come out boldly. Then I saw Jacobus, also, and he charged me particularly to tell you the same words that John so often repeats, 'The time is at hand.' He, too, thinks you should take a leading part in this."

Jesus inquired very particularly about John's preaching and the effects it was having; and Mary, greatly encouraged, went on with ardor and volubility. "Why," she said, "you have no idea of what multitudes of people are there, and how they come from everywhere. James saw a number of Essenes there from Engedi, and Jude saw a great company of Jews from Damascus, and others from Tyre and Sidon; and they say that great caravans are coming from beyond the Euphrates. Every one thinks that it is the final gathering of Israel, and that the new Kingdom will shortly be set up, as John says. And he says that only those who come forward and are baptized and take a part can have any share in the New Kingdom. All others will be shut out, and with the heathen be miserably destroyed. John inquired after you and told us privately that he believed that you could do more good than he if you would come out boldly. He says, 'Tell Jesus that God is calling

him to this work and he must obey.' Did he not say so, James?"

James, appealed to by his mother, acquiesced insofar as to say, rather reluctantly, that John had used some such expressions. "But," he went on, "John means, of course, that Jesus shall first repent and be baptized; his learning in the Law and his smooth speeches will avail nothing with John. You all saw how he put down the Doctors and Pharisees from Jerusalem. John, as is plain to see, is at heart an Essene. He openly preaches the most essential of our doctrines, as the brotherhood of all Jews, community of goods; and by his example, at least, he teaches our doctrines of plain living and abstinence, and is clearly against all priestcraft and blood-sacrifices. Then, as you all saw, he is like the Essenes in his prayers and washings and Sabbath observances, in all of which Jesus is as lax as a fisherman of Bethsaida. Here he is working most of the time, this Sabbatic year, and, so they say, even on Sabbath. He eats without washing, and prays any way he likes. What John wants of Jesus is, first of all, to repent and be baptized."

This speech of James was not a surprise to any one in the company, for since James had openly declared in favor of the Essenes, his disapproval of his brother Jesus' laxity in ceremonial observance had often been expressed and emphasized in many ways.

Jesus made no answer to James, but his mother, with soft complaisance, essayed to preserve the harmony that James' rough speech seemed to threaten. "Of course," she said, "Jesus would expect, like the rest, to repent and be baptized; but I cannot be mistaken in thinking that John expressed great regard for Jesus, and said that God was calling him. Did not you understand him so, Jude?"

Jude, thus addressed, answered much in the same spirit as James had done, agreeing that John had spoken in some such way. "But," he said, "so far from John being an

Essene, as James asserts, he is really a Zealot. He believes in a return to the ways and customs of ancient times as truly as Jacobus himself; and Jacobus believes that this whole movement is at bottom Nationalist, and that the Messiah who is to come is none other than a Nationalist leader, a Zealot,—and Jesus is no Zealot, he is not even a follower of Moses and the Law. How can he be of any help to John? ”

XXXI

ENON

"And John, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?"—Luke vii-19.

The pool of Enon is bordered on the one side by a small plain or meadow which, watered by a perennial stream, is a paradise of fertility and beauty. A waving forest of tall reeds borders the stream, with scattered clumps of tree-like olcanders and red tamarisk, while farther back are great, burly sycamores with their white trunks and broad leaves. Immense evergreen oaks spread far abroad their huge limbs, and scattered here and there is the vivid green of orange trees. Rising above all are the feathery fronds of the stately palm.

Here the hosts who come to John's baptism are now encamped. On the other side of the pool the rocky hills rise bare and precipitous, and stretch away, wave over wave of lonely grandeur, to the distant peaks of Ammon. Here the wilderness begins, and here, after the labors of the day and at night-fall, John retires and spends the night alone. The cave where he dwells is held in awe, like a sacred fane, and none dares offer to attend him. Rumors have gone abroad that in this cave John meets and communes with the Messiah. Some say that, as to Moses of old, God Himself talks to him there, and all believe that, like Elijah, he receives angelic sustenance from the messengers of Jehovah.

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It is night, and we are high on the hillside at this cave of John's. The opening of the cave faces westward, and on either side of the cave's mouth is a large rough boulder,

on which are seated the two men we know, Jesus and John. It is early evening, and there is yet a faint red glow above the far Judean hills, where the sun went down, and the full moon, rising above the mountains of Ammon, fills the valley below with a flood of light. The pool of Enon, to the right, glitters like a burnished shield, and farther away and more to the left, the tents of Israel show white and shining in the still moonlight, like those of an invading host.

Jesus and John have scarcely spoken together since Jesus came in the late afternoon, and now they have sat gazing at the panorama spread before them for a long time without speaking. "The harvest truly is great, but how much of it is tares!" said Jesus, at last, slowly and sadly.

"It is not for us to inquire about the tares," answered John, firmly, and continued with decision: "Moses and the holy prophets sowed good seed; and if tares have sprung up, the Evil One hath done it. We are only servants sent forth to reap, and there cometh One who will know the tares, and separate them from the wheat and burn them with fire. It is not for us to do."

"True," answered Jesus, "but the Holy One — and blessed be his name! — is long in coming. It may yet be long, and what are these to do? The shepherd who would lead forth the flock into the mountains and deserts must find them pasture and a fold. The Holy One, when he comes, will be the Great Shepherd. He should find his sheep housed and fed. They should be in the way where he will himself lead them. What *is* that way, and who will lead them in that way till he comes?"

John did not answer, and after a long silence Jesus went on. "Thou canst not but see that Israel is being scattered like sheep upon the mountains; they run hither and thither, they wander up and down, looking and praying for one to lead them. They have looked and prayed that thou, who hast called them forth, wouldst lead them; but thou answer-

est them nay, and sayest there cometh one to lead them, whose shoes thou art not worthy to unloose. But the summer is past, the harvest is ending, and the promised One comes not; and the howling of the wolves is already heard among the rocks.

“ Even now there are those who are telling the people that the lost Ark, the Urim and the Thummim and all the sacred vessels that Jeremiah hid away in a cave on Mount Nebo, may now be brought back, if Israel will go forth to the desert after them. Thou hast heard of Theudas, who says he is Moses, and bids the people follow him to Mount Nebo, where, he says, the lost vessels will be restored and the Messiah appear. Another tells the people that the lost vessels were hid away by an angel on Mount Gerizim, and *he* promises to show where they are. And many believe in *him*. And so Jacobus, with his brothers, and Ehud are telling the people that the Messiah is a mighty man of war, who will lead the armies of Israel against Rome. They ask every man to arm and be ready, telling them that thou art sent but to prepare the way for a war of liberty. Then there is James, my brother, with Cochiba and the rest, who claim thee for an Essene, and say that Israel is to become as they, and that thou art set apart and separated like as they are and as Israel was in the days of Moses. And so this people, as a man possessed, wander up and down, seeking rest but finding none.”

When Jesus began speaking, John sat with folded arms and bowed head, for he was exhausted with the extreme labors and excitements of the day, and his iron frame was relaxed in rest. His face, in the light of the full moon, though cast and furrowed by care, was placid, restful, and reverent. Gradually, as Jesus proceeded, John raised his head, his folded hands dropped by his side; Jesus, looking steadfastly at him, saw a change in John that no words will describe. There seemed a moving breath, like the sweep of an angel's wing. Jesus himself was thrilled by

it; and the face of John, as Jesus gazed upon him, seemed to shine and glow in the moonlight and become indeed beautiful.

When Jesus ceased speaking, John arose, with his face towards the stars. At the same time Jesus, moved by the same impulse, cast off his mantle and also arose to his feet. Then both together raised their hands above their heads, and John alone prayed: "O thou Almighty! The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and (hesitating, and adding slowly) of all the earth, Thou who from Father Adam up through Noe and all the patriarchs hast guided and preserved and gently led Thy people! Thou who by Thy Holy Prophets hast promised to send Thy Holy One to redeem and save at the last: send now, and send quickly. Justify and establish this Thy servant whom thou hast sent to proclaim the glad and acceptable year. Show thyself now in Thy might and Thy majesty; and let not thine enemies laugh and rejoice. Thy people are as lost sheep upon the mountains. They cry unto Thee for a shepherd to lead them. Thou hast promised a shepherd,—the Messiah, the Holy One. Send, O Lord God! and send quickly."

Jesus and John resumed their seats in a silence that neither hastened to break. John was the first to speak. "The husbandman," he said, "must sow his seed, whether it be cold or hot, wet or dry. He knoweth not whether he shall reap little or much; God alone giveth the increase. It is not given to *us* to determine the metes and bounds of this movement: that remains with God. We can only sow the seed."

"True," answered Jesus, "the husbandman must plant and sow seed, but the good vineyard he must dig and prune and train."

John leaned his face upon his hands, and, absorbed in thought, gazed off towards the white tents and moving lights of the great encampment. "I see," he said, at

length, "there is much lacking in me. My manner of life, which I cannot now change, unfits me for this work. I cannot lead this people. I am but a herald who calls and marshals, and if the Messiah, the wise and good shepherd, delays long his coming, there will be foolish and evil shepherds to mislead and spoil the flock. It has always seemed to me that thou art better fitted for this great work than I, and *now* I am *sure*."

"I am but a sinful man," answered Jesus solemnly. "The children on the street will point their fingers at me and cry, 'There goeth the carpenter, the son of Joseph.' My mother and my brethren think me a sinner, even more than others, and they have urged me to come to thy baptism, and for that am I come."

"It is not meet that I should baptize thee," answered John. "Thou shouldst baptize me rather. Thou art greater and wiser than I. If the Messiah cometh not now, thou, and not I, must be the shepherd of Israel. I can do no more. I have uttered my cry. I have spoken the words that were given me to speak, and Israel is roused up like a lion; and who shall lead him? It is thou who must answer."

As John ceased speaking there came floating down from far away the wild, weird, fearsome howl of mountain wolves. At the same time, from the valley and plain beneath arose the pleasing sound of mirth and jollity. The simple country people, trusting implicitly that this Sabbath year will bring the long-looked-for Messiah and usher in the glorious era of rest and abundance, have cast off every thought of labor and care, and are enlivening the evening with music and dancing. At times the fitful breeze carries the sound away, and it sinks to a murmur, as of far-off surf. Then again it swells and mounts and roars like a mighty tide. Voices are heard in song; and laughter as of girls; the ringing clash of cymbals, the blast of trumpets and horns; and through all, piercing the mass of

sound with sharp, clear tones, the high shrill notes of flutes and pan-pipes.

Jesus and John sat listening in silence for some time. At length Jesus speaks, repeating from Jeremiah, “ ‘ Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring again the captivity of Jacob’s tents, and there shall be heard again the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry.’ ”

John makes no answer, and his stern, set face shows no softening light. At the moment a wave of sound swells up on the passing breeze, and we can hear distinctly above the clang and scream of cymbals, horns, and pipes the chant of that grand triumphal psalm, “ O sing unto the Lord a new song, for He hath done marvelous things.”

Jesus was absorbed and elevated; his whole form was dilated; his fine face was rapt and glowing, as with visions of Paradise. “ How beautiful it is,” he said, at length. He seemed not to be addressing any one, but went on almost as if in soliloquy. “ How plain and easy the road to happiness is, and yet how few there be who find it. The plain, simple people, with kind hearts, who without storehouse or barn, live like the birds,— the sweetest joys of life may be theirs, if they have no envies or jealousies or upbraidings, no strivings after great things. This green earth might be again a Paradise for all God’s children, for God does not change. He causeth His rain to fall upon the evil and the good, and His bow is still in the cloud.

“ The sun shines, the moon gives her light, the stars extend their greetings. The earth bringeth forth abundantly: there is corn in the fields, there are cattle upon a thousand hills. The wine and oil do not fail. The lily blooms as well beside the herdsman’s hut as in the garden

of Herod or Cæsar. Man alone is changed and gone away backwards; and is it not said of the Messiah that he is to restore all things? *To restore all things!* Not to mend and patch, not to put the new wine in old bottles, not to vamp up the old, worn, and filthy garment with a patch of new; not to bring back Abraham with his wronged Hagar, turned away to die in the desert, and his cowardly deceits; not Jacob, defrauding his brother, not David with his vile lusts and sheddings of blood;—but Adam as he was before the Fall. This earth may be again a Paradise.”

Jesus paused, and again there was silence. The sounds of revelry below have sunk to a murmur. From far away, in some mountain fold, the repeated mother-call of a lamb comes floating down distinct and clear, and from a near-by tree a nightingale is pouring forth in quivering, passionate strains its song of ecstasy.

When the nightingale ceased its song, Jesus repeated absently, “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.”

“Yes, sometime,” answered John, sternly, “but not till all men have repented and turned from their evil ways. There should be fasting and prayer, not dancing and revelry. The Messiah will come only to a people clothed in sackcloth and ashes, never to one wine-bibbing and riotous.”

A shadow of perplexity and doubt settled upon the face of Jesus at these words of John, and he stooped and began writing with his finger in the sand. After a time Jesus raised himself, and continued in the same absent monologue:

“Yes, that is right, for the Scripture says so, and it is sin in me to think differently; and yet somehow these poor people will still appear to me as lost sheep, misled

and abandoned by false shepherds, and yet we say, the sheep must repent!"

"'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord,'" answered John sternly, and Jesus rejoined, "Verily."

XXXII

TEMPTATION

“Again the Devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.”—Matthew iv-8.

The next day Jesus was baptized. John himself performed the rite in a most impressive manner, and presented Jesus to the people in a speech in which, in the figurative and exaggerated style of the Orient, he gave his own view of Jesus' exalted character and ability. He stated that he believed Jesus to be wiser and better qualified to become the leader of Israel than he himself, and he called upon all to show Jesus due reverence and be taught of him. He went so far as to call Jesus “The Lamb of God,” upon whom the spirit had descended like a dove.

The beauty of Jesus' person, the dignity and humility with which he bore this unexpected eulogium, made a deep and lasting impression on the multitude. But Jesus, overwhelmed by the height and suddenness of his elevation, and not yet fully settled in his own mind, withdrew himself and went away alone to the old haunts of John and Addi in the desert.

In this secluded retreat Jesus was visited by Jacobus, whose admiration for Jesus had been confirmed and intensified by the encomiums of John, and who now felt sure that the public mind was ripe for that universal uprising so long contemplated. Jacobus was accompanied by Ehud and one Helon, a Rabbi and Zealot from Babylonia, who had come with a considerable company from beyond Euphrates to the baptism of John.

The representations of Jacobus that nine-tenths of the Jews in Palestine were eager for insurrection and wanted

only a leader needed no confirmation. Jesus knew that it was true; he knew that, as Jacobus said, an army of men would spring to arms at the blast of the trumpet, and be ready to die for God and liberty. Neither was he unmoved by the strong and earnest words of Ehud, who rehearsed with fiery eloquence the glorious examples of the olden time, of Samson, of Shamgar, and of Gideon, not forgetting the heroic women, Judith and Jael and Deborah. To these appeals Helon added his account of the stir and unrest and eager expectation of the Jewish population beyond Euphrates, of their wealth and power and zeal, and of their vast numbers. Helon was a Scribe in his own country, one of the very few of his class who had anywhere joined the Zealots; and with all the trained subtlety and acumen of the accomplished lawyer that he was, he presented to Jesus the claims of the Zealots with a graphic power that the rough Jacobus had not approached.

True, there was much that was vague and contradictory in the plans and schemes not only of the Zealots but of John, and among the people generally were notions of prosperity and happiness as wild and various as dreams. Ideas of a return to patriarchal simplicity existed side by side with expectations of regal splendor and magnificence excelling even Solomon in all his glory. To the poor slave grinding at the mill, the New Kingdom meant liberty, idleness, and boundless sensual enjoyments. To fierce spirits like Ehud, it meant the sweeping devastations of measureless vengeance. To John it meant a return to all the rigors of the Mosaic ritual, and to Jacobus a return to conditions like those of Samson and Gideon. To Jesus, at this time, it meant something of all these: he was not yet clear. But that the Messiah would be a King and ruler over all the earth he as much believed as did the simplest shepherd of the hills. He had drunk in such teaching with his mother's milk. With all the diversity of opinion on other points, on this there was unity. The

Messiah was at hand; he would be a King; he would have absolute power and would rule over all the earth. Jesus believed in all this as truly as did the mystic John or the fierce and implacable Ehud. And now the leadership in this world-movement, which was to end in the Messiah's kingship and universal dominion, was offered and even passionately urged upon him, and not only by learned and artful sectaries, by Helon and Ehud and Jacobus, but by John,—John, whom he already looked upon as a messenger of God, greater than any prophet.

While Jesus was thinking of these things, there appeared upon the scene a deputation from John, and with them Jude, Jesus' brother from Nazareth. John sent to urge Jesus to take up the work in Judea or Galilee, and make a diversion to turn away the storm that was threatening to destroy whatever good had already been done. Herod, they said, had ordered John to cease preaching and the people were forbidden to gather to hear him. Jude brought also the dismal news that Shunam had seized upon the home of Jesus in Nazareth, ejected Mary and Doris, and they, houseless and homeless and in utter destitution, had taken refuge with their kinsman Zebedee at Capernaum. While Jude yet spoke, there came another Job's messenger running and exhausted, who said that John had been seized by the soldiers of Antipas and carried off to prison.

To all this Jesus made no answer, only with each new appeal his face darkened with a deeper shadow. The youthful smoothness of his cheek and brow showed new and deeper lines, the gentle, lucid eyes, that were wont to gaze upon all the world with sad, mild tolerance, took on a look more fierce and threatening than that of the vengeful Ehud, while upon his pallid brow the great blue veins stood out swelling and throbbing with the pulsations of his mighty heart.

Then Jesus arose. "It is not meet that I should answer

to these things now," he said. "I will go away till the morning; then I will answer. God's peace be with you all. Remember it is to God and his own soul that each must finally answer, and not to man. Farewell." And Jesus passed alone up the narrow path and disappeared towards the desert, none daring to follow him.

The next morning Jacobus and his companions waited at the cave till nearly noon for Jesus to return. Then, with few words, Jacobus leading, they followed the path Jesus had taken, and went out towards the desert. It was high noon when they found Jesus seated on a bare rock where the burning sun smote down straight from the zenith on his uncovered head, and the simoon drifted the yellow sands about his feet.

What had passed in the mind of Jesus in this long vigil it is competent for few men even to imagine. To offer words seems almost a presumptuous intrusion. Jesus, like every Jew, had drunk in the doctrine of vengeance with his earliest thought. To be avenged upon heathen enemies was a cardinal precept of the Mosaic law, and had not he suffered wrongs to be avenged? Those stripes and blows at Jerusalem and Tiberias! Those dungeon horrors! And Mary of Magdala!! Ah! But he must not think of her! Madness is there! But he cannot forget, and wild thoughts will rise, and fierce thrills of vengeance. Should the wicked live and triumph?

And now a mother and sister driven forth homeless, to beg or starve on the street; and the friend of his youth, the one kindred spirit known to him on earth, snatched away to a captivity worse than death! And all to be silently endured, when redress and ample power for vengeance were as if thrust upon him.

All these things appealed in the most artful and insidious manner to all that was human and manlike in Jesus. A desecrated love, religion, patriotism, ambition, revenge, — all put out pleading hands and called him not only to

earthly and sensual satisfactions, but to fulfill for himself and for his nation the high destiny that had been fore-ordained of God from the beginning of time.

To the simple mind of Jesus, ignorant as he was of the world and the power of Rome, the magnificent schemes of Jacobus and Ehud were entirely feasible. He did not doubt the ability of Jacobus, with the armed millions of Israel, to overcome and put down every earthly power; and indeed, as was shown a generation later, with a competent leader the Jewish nation was equal to it. He believed without a shadow of doubt that the just and glorious reign of Immanuel over the whole earth was about to begin,—the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. He himself might stand next to the Messiah in honor and power. *He had long felt and known that he was no common man!*

Could it even be that ——— No! No! Perish the thought. It was not for him to imagine himself the Messiah, to inaugurate an epoch of war and bloodshed. Spite of Moses, who was wrong in so many things, it was his instinct to feel and know that he who took the sword should perish by the sword. Peace and good will to all mankind was written by the hand of God on all the green earth and in the sky. He saw it in the clustered vine, the laden branches of the pomegranate, the olive and the palm, in the painted lily and the rose. He heard this, God's message, in the song of birds, in the sound of running waters, in the waves of the sea, and in the whispers of the breeze. He would abide by that, live for it, and if need be die.

When Jacobus and his companions came to where Jesus was, they were astonished, and none dared speak to him. Jesus did not appear to see them: he did not move or speak, and they drew back, abashed and overawed. There had been a great change wrought in Jesus in those few hours. There was the same beautiful face, and clear, calm eyes, the tender, sweet lips, and the high, smooth

brow,—but changed all, purified and exalted, stamped with that mark ineffable which, more than the laurel or the bay, distinguishes the victors over Apollyon.

Jesus did not keep his friends waiting long, but motioning them to draw near, spoke to them in a low tone, and in a manner simple and quiet and gentle, but yet with a firmness that admitted no question. “I have prayed God,” he said, “to direct me in this, and I believe He has. John was the Messenger of God; he was sent of God to do a work; he has been cut short by wicked men. But will God be mocked or turned aside? He bids us, the disciples and friends of John, to take up his unfinished work and go forward with it. John did not teach resistance by force and arms; neither should we. I go to Galilee to take up the work of John!”

There was a long silence, broken at last by Jacobus, who said, “Truly the mantle of John has fallen upon thee, Jesus of Nazareth! Thou, now, art God’s messenger, and He will instruct thee differently in His own good time. It is the virtue of a Zealot to wait. I wait. I will go with thee to Jordan; beyond that I dare not now go. Behold, I have spoken. It is enough.”

When Jacobus ceased, the others who had accompanied him, Ehud leading, silently withdrew, and left Jesus alone with Jacobus.

XXXIII

THE FIRST MIRACLE

"We have duty to perform: to cultivate the human soul, to defend mystery against miracle, to adore the incomprehensible and reject the absurd; to purify faith, and obliterate superstition; to remove the vermin from the garden of God."—Hugo.

When Jesus came back from the desert he was rowed across the lake by Jacobus and left with his kinsmen at Bethsaida. John being in prison, the people for the most part had returned to their homes, and the hope of an immediate change in Israel had been reluctantly abandoned. Jesus found his mother and sister doing menial work in the household of Zebedee, and he himself, though welcomed by the women and young men, was entertained by Zebedee with but sour hospitality.

He was expected to go at once to work and redeem if possible his paternal homestead, or at least to provide for his mother and sister; and when it was found that, instead, he was idly gathering the young fishermen about him and filling their minds with notions wilder and more impracticable than even those of John, the elder men, as Zebedee and Jonas, began to look upon him with disfavor. Not only had Jesus himself ceased to work, but he was the cause of idleness in many others. The sons of Zebedee and Jonas and other young fishermen, with serving-men and slaves, began to grow remiss in their duties. They had lost all interest in the ordinary business of life, and began to talk vaguely of a New Kingdom of universal brotherhood and a community of goods.

Zebedee and Jonas and the rest had believed in John while he was with them; but now that he had been seized by a mere handful of soldiers and thrust helpless into

prison, no man or God interfering, his prestige was gone, and they, with the greater number in Israel, were disposed to return to their usual vocations and to their habitual attitude of patient waiting. But again, like all simple, sincere men, they were naturally drawn towards Jesus. His noble superiority, so manifest to every one who saw him and heard him speak, joined to a simple brotherly kindness in word and deed and manner, drew every earnest soul to him with resistless power. As a Rabbi in the regular order, a teacher according to Moses and the Law, he would have commanded universal reverence. He would have been greater than Hillel or Shammai. He could have chosen a wife among the daughters of Princes, and instead of living in poverty and destitution have lived in luxury, and been more honored than even the High Priest at Jerusalem.

Mary and Doris were perfectly aware of this; and now, in their extreme need, deprived of their home, compelled to clean fish and do slaves' work in the household of a kinsman for a bare living, and at the same time see Jesus idly consorting with dreaming youths, vagabond fishermen, and slaves earning nothing, and withal himself living upon charity, they were sorely grieved, and began to have misgivings about Jesus being in his right mind. With such influences at work, Jesus soon found that he could do nothing at Capernaum. Four youths, two of them his cousins, were all the real converts he had made there,—and they had been first the disciples of John; so he went away, to try what could be done in the towns and villages where he was not known.

Here success attended him beyond all his hopes or expectations. The extreme poverty of the people of the hill-country of Galilee had largely prevented them from attending on the preaching of John; but the rumor of him had penetrated to every hamlet and to every household, and among a people exceedingly ignorant and supersti-

tious the rumor had far exceeded the fact. Astounding miracles were reported of him, and the story that he had been imprisoned by Herod was scarcely believed. If he was imprisoned, it was only to show the power of God. John, who was really Elias, would, as did he of old, call down fire from heaven and destroy his persecutors.

And so when Jesus appeared, unknown and unannounced, at Betharbel, and began preaching repentance as John had done, it was at once noised abroad that *he was John*, and in a day he had sprung into fame. The people flocked to hear him with an enthusiasm and blind devotion that amazed Jesus, and touched his heart with a depth of pity and compassion which from that hour began to grow and increase in him, till it embraced not alone these poor peasants of the hills but all the poor and despised of earth. These people with whom Jesus now was were the Boors, Fellaheen, serfs of the soil; they were the despised Amhaartz of the Jewish communion. Their excessive burdens of toil made it impossible for them to observe the rites of the synagogue, and though they were nominally Jews, they were Levitically unclean and regarded by their masters and by all attendants at the synagogue as degraded outcasts, whose touch was pollution and whose salvation even in the world to come was extremely doubtful.

Jesus, as we said, began preaching repentance, as John had done, but he scarcely thought of baptism. Jesus, like all original men, was a "swallower of formulas." With these simple, ignorant, but kind-hearted people crowding about him, eager to hear and to obey his slightest word, he saw more clearly than even before how foolish and even pernicious was all that intricate labyrinth of formalism with which Rabbinism and Priestcraft had hedged in the plain precepts of the Law, and made it impossible for the common man to observe at all what was really required.

He noticed among these poor people,—what is found always and everywhere among the same class,—a spirit of hospitality, of helpfulness, and of liberality towards one another not to be found in the higher walks of life. They shared with one another what they had borrowed and lent and gave with cheerful friendliness. Jesus had thought much of the beauty and utility of these homely virtues before; but now for the first time he began thinking of them as of universal application, as indeed the foundation of society and of the social state. He began here to talk to his disciples about it and to call their attention to the happiness men might enjoy if they all lived that way. But the disciples, scarcely more than the people generally, got any clear ideas from Jesus' teaching.

It may be that Jesus himself at this time had no clearly defined plan about the future, if, indeed, he *ever* had. All was vague and formless as to detail, with the one central controlling idea of human brotherhood and love of man for man. And so, immediately Jesus began to teach, his disciples, who had also been John's disciples, began to raise the question of baptism. Jesus was disposed to ignore baptism altogether; but as soon as the matter was mentioned, there was a clamor raised for the practice of the rite as John had instituted it, and Jesus felt himself obliged to allow his disciples to baptize as John had done. There was little water in these parts, not enough for immersion, but they went through the form, and finally, when water became very scarce, sprinkling was very doubtfully allowed to be sufficient.

The synagogues in this region being very small, all Jesus' meetings were in the open air. He preached on all days alike, and it would seem that but for his disciples he would have forgotten that there was any Sabbath. One Sabbath, while he was preaching, there walked boldly in among the congregation a naked, hairy man, very dirty and filthy in all his appearance, with matted, grizzled

locks and finger-nails grown like eagles' talons, and where once on his wrists were raw, festering sores were now horrible callouses where the fetters had rubbed and chafed. About his ankles were still fetters of iron, which clanked as he walked. The chain connecting the fetters had been broken, as also the chain with which the man had been for long years held to a rock in the open air. The man was said to be possessed of a devil, and was looked upon with awe and fear by the whole congregation, who made way for him with the same superstitious reverence with which all rude, uncivilized people regard the idiotic and insane.

The man came in, mumbling incoherent words, working his jaws, and making horrible grimaces. He went straight towards where Jesus sat, and when he was quite near he stopped, and looked fixedly at Jesus, continuing still to mumble as before. The man's appearance made such a disturbance that Jesus ceased speaking and turned his attention to the man. Jesus gazed at him for some time, but without any show of anger, or even of annoyance or sternness. His look was full, rather, of tender pity and compassion.

While Jesus thus looked at him, the man ceased to mumble and to grimace, and with eyes growing large with wonder and still fixed upon Jesus, his hideous face began to change in a wonderful manner: the wolfish fierceness faded away, and in its place came, first, a child-like wonder; then, as he still gazed, a look of fear succeeded, and with a cry as of terror but with eyes as if spellbound and still fastened upon Jesus, he turned and began to shrink away. Then Jesus arose and put out his hand and took hold of the man's arm. The look of pity and compassion in Jesus had grown till his face appeared to the amazed people about him to grow luminous and to shine like an angel's, and there were tears in his eyes.

The man also seemed to be shot through by the touch and look of Jesus with a new, strange sense. His fear

was gone, and he allowed Jesus to lead him away to a seat near him, where, after being covered by Jesus with his own cloak, he sat silent, with bowed head, while Jesus went on and finished his discourse. Then the man, with sobs and tears, cast himself at Jesus' feet and besought him to let him remain with him and be his servant. But Jesus commanded a smith who was present to strike the fetters from the man and to let him go, which he did with fear and reluctance, and the man was restored from that hour.

The stories about this incident that went abroad were various, and soon became greatly exaggerated and even whimsical. Jesus tried to have them corrected, but he found it entirely impossible to put the matter right, and so ceased to give any attention to it.

When Jesus left the hill-country and came down to the cities of the coast, he already had a large following and his fame had preceded him. The first city visited was Chorazin, which was a place much frequented by low class people of all sects and denominations, Jews as well as heathen, on account of its ancient grove and shrine on a hill, where, it was said, the ancient Canaanites and kings of Israel, from Solomon down, had offered incense to Baal and Ashtoreth. It still shared with Jerusalem, Tyre, and Sidon the fame of being a holy place.

XXXIV

CHORAZIN

“He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.”—Mark xvi-9.

If we take our stand in the market place in Chorazin, on a morning at this time, we may be present at one of the great gatherings where Jesus now daily appears.

It is still early, but the crowd has begun to gather, and we can well believe that the place, which is said to hold ten thousand people, will soon be crowded. Boats full of people are arriving at the wharf, which is in plain view, and the lake far away towards Hippos and Tiberias is dotted with approaching sails. We remark, first of all, that this gathering of people are nearly all of one class, the despised Amhaartz. There is considerable variety of costume and manner of life and appearance, but the experienced eye at once detects that they are all “sinners, unclean,” and abhorrent in every way to the orthodox Jew. A large proportion are of the poor peasantry from the hill-country of Galilee, rough, unwashed grubbers and vine dressers, clothed in their one garment of coarse brown stuff gathered in about the loins with a raw leather girdle, and speaking a rude *patois* that has made them subject time out of mind to gibes and ridicule by the more elegant Jerusalemites.

With them are quite a number of that noisy, turbulent, swearing set, the fishermen of the lake, but these are more clannish and keep mostly by themselves. More notable still are the shepherds of Perea and far Bashan, who are here in quite large numbers. They are a stalwart, fierce-looking lot, clothed in their one garment of sheep-skin,

and every man armed with a sling and short sword. They appear more like bandits than peaceable citizens.

In all, however, of whatever class, we note an expression of sober, earnest seriousness, as if matters of great importance are on their minds. Though mainly the same men we saw at the Chariot Race in Tiberias, they are in a mood so different we may scarcely recognize them. For now appears here, as at Tiberias, our old acquaintance, the juggling seller of charms and amulets. With bold effrontery he spreads his mat in an open space and begins, as at Tiberias, in a loud voice to advertise his wares. He has scarcely begun, however, before a stout, young fisherman starts from the crowd and with a sweep of his foot scatters and breaks up the whole outfit, whereupon the juggler, with horrid oaths, whips out a long, gleaming knife and makes a wild rush at the fisherman; but the latter, showing no sign of fear, dextrously catching the juggler by the wrist, easily disarms him, and then, giving him a few sounding buffets with his bare hand, drives him, cursing and screaming, away from the market place. As the young fisherman turns and comes laughing back, we are not displeased to recognize in him our friend Simon, the son of Jonas.

As we move freely among the crowd, we pass where a group of persons are listening to a voluble talker who appears to be one of the better sort from the hill-country of Galilee. We hear him saying something about Jesus, and we draw near and listen. "Yes, his name is Jesus," the man is saying, "some say of Nazareth, but that isn't so: he was seen with John beyond Jordan a long time ago; and no one knows where he came from, and no one ever will: he came from God, and that is enough."

A shepherd of rather distinguished appearance here interrupted by saying, "Yes, I saw him with John a long time ago at the cave of Addi, and I saw John baptize him

only a few weeks ago; and there came a sign from heaven, and a voice that some said was the Bath Quol. I stood near John and Jesus before they went down into the water, and I heard John say that Jesus should be the one to baptize *him*, and not he Jesus; and he said that Jesus was a greater man than he. And when they came up out of the water, there was a voice from heaven, the Bath Quol, some said, and a great light that dazzled the eyes, and with the light came a white dove that lighted on Jesus' head."

"And you saw and heard it all!" said the first speaker, decisively, and was going on with further confirmation, but was interrupted by the shepherd.

"Nay, nay, I cannot just say that I saw and heard it all myself," he said. "I was too far away from the last part of it. I did see a great light on the water, that dazzled my eyes, so I didn't see the dove; but I heard hundreds of people say afterwards that there *was* a dove and a voice."

"Yes, it is all true," rejoined the first speaker, "and I can tell you another miracle that Jesus did, that I saw with my own eyes and I will swear to it. At Betharbel, where I live, there has long been a man so possessed with devils that no one could tame him, and nothing could be done with him. He broke his chains like straw, and came and went just any way the devil drove him. Well, that one possessed came one Sabbath where Jesus was preaching, and shouted out a lot of gibberish that meant that Jesus had come to torment him before his time. Well, what did Jesus do, but just put out his hand, making a sign like this (with a gesture in the air), and said, 'I command ye to come out of him!' and with that, making an awful cry, the devil went out of the man like a flash of lightning, and we all saw it."

"Do you say that Jesus healed the man possessed, on

the Sabbath day?" asked a hawk-nosed old Israelite who was leaning upon a staff and had been listening very attentively.

"Yes," answered the man from Betharbel, "he did that on the Sabbath, and he did other things. He carried the burden of a poor slave woman on the Sabbath day, and he showed in his discourse how it was right to do so."

"Will he set up to contradict the holy Rabbis and Moses and the Law?" cried the old man, growing excited. "I warn ye, this Jesus is a false prophet, and I will none of him."

All eyes are at once turned upon the old man, and we may notice that he alone of all about him is clothed with a Tallith of fine cloth, with fringes, and wears also large showy phylacteries. As he passes on, striking his staff angrily upon the pavement and mumbling his discontent, one who has not before spoken explains in a low, guarded voice that the old man is the Chazzan of the synagogue at Chorazin, and a "Chabber" (rich man) there.

"I can well believe you," answers the first speaker, with something of anger in his tone. "The synagogue and the rich are down on Jesus, just as they were on John,—and they have reason to be. He consorts more with the poor and unclean, and when he goes to a synagogue he talks to the rich and great in a way they can't stand: he calls them whited sepulchers, extortioners, robbers of the poor and the fatherless. I tell you he gives it to them hot and heavy. Up at Nazareth the other day, where he went from Betharbel, they drove him out of their synagogue and tried to kill him, and would, I believe, if there hadn't been a lot of us fellows there who followed him from Betharbel. Though a great Rabbi, as any one can see, he cares nothing for hand-washing and doesn't at all mind eating and drinking and touching

elbows with us common people or with anybody. I've seen him talking with a Samaritan, even."

"I like not that," cried out a wizened and wrinkled old man who had not before spoken. "It's all right for him to consort with poor Jews, the real children of Abraham, but those cursed Samaritans are sons of Belial altogether; if this Jesus were a true prophet, he would know better than to have anything to do with them. I doubt if he is a true prophet."

Many scowling looks were turned upon the old man, and he from Betharbel at once made answer. "You are an old man," he said, "and your words should be words of truth and soberness, but I must contend that there is no great difference between Jews and Samaritans. I live where I see much of the Samaritans, and I must say that I have known as good men among the Samaritans as I have among the Jews; and I, for one, am glad that this Jesus is not too proud to speak to them."

The old man was eager to answer, but was cut off by the stalwart shepherd. "*All* nations shall know the Lord, is promised in the scriptures," he said, "and the Samaritans are as near to us as any other nation, at least; and as to this Jesus being a true prophet, how can any one doubt it? He answers every requirement. The Messiah, whom we all know is about to appear, is to be preceded by a great prophet, even Elias, as many believe; and John, who denied being himself the prophet, declared that this Jesus *was* that prophet."

"Hout! Tout!" here broke in the old man, his cracked voice rising shrill. "Talk not to me of a prophet with a smooth face and with hair and beard curly and beautiful, like a Greek dandy's and without a gray hair. No great prophet was ever that way, and Elias least of all. The great prophet, whatever his name, will be old, leaning upon a staff, with hair and beard white as the snows of Hermon."

While the old man is speaking, there is a great shout raised among the crowd at the entrance to the market place, and word is passed along that Jesus is at hand. Instantly every tongue is stilled and every eye is turned in the direction indicated. The crowd is very great and very dense, but there seems no need for Grand Marshal or plumed Herald or armed Henchmen. A way is opened up to the dais at the further side of the market place as if by natural impulse of the people, and on either side of the way the sick, the lame, and the blind are allowed to take foremost place, so they may be nearest to the Great Healer as he passes along.

And now we can see Jesus approaching. There are with him the four fishermen, James and John, Simon and Andrew, who, though clad only in their rough fisher's coats and looking rather unkempt and unwashed, hold their heads high and look a little proudly on the motley throng. They even manifest some impatience that Jesus should pause so long to listen to the complaints of those in distress, and to speak words of cheer and of comfort to them. They think it would be more dignified and impressive to march straight along, after the manner of the great Rabbis, with head erect, looking neither to the right nor left, seeing no one and being only seen.

But Jesus is not thinking about being a Great Rabbi, nor, indeed, about himself at all. As he draws slowly near and comes where we can see him plainly and look into his eyes, we think we see and understand how it is that the word or look, the very presence of this man, exerts such power. It is all very simple. *He has forgotten himself.* The demon of self, whose visible image is self-consciousness, has been utterly cast out of this man, leaving no trace. He is thinking of you and of me, and not at all of himself. We know this without being told, and we, in common with this vast throng, feel in looking upon him

the thrill of this supreme consecration. We realize that this royal presence is also our Brother Man.

Every simple, sincere soul is rapt in silent awe. Even the old Chazzan, who but a moment ago was denouncing Jesus, stands spellbound, leaning upon his staff, with jaw dropped and with amazement written on his stubborn, Jewish face. A Canaanite camel-driver at our side instinctively bows his head and mutters an invocation; and a pale, wan, shriveled wreck of a woman, clad in filthy rags, casts herself at Jesus' feet, with her face in the dust. She is the vilest of the vile: her touch, or even her breath, is pollution to a Rabbi.

And Jesus is thought to be a great Rabbi. What will Jesus do! Instead of scorn or contempt, instead, even, of condescension, he becomes, for the moment, this wretched being at his feet. His spirit is *her* spirit! He has put himself in *her* place! She is *his* sister! He cannot help feeling so,—it is the divine in him which has risen above all earthly trammels and proclaims the Brotherhood of Man. A look of mingled pity and of pain speaks in his face, as he stoops and takes the poor creature by the arm and raises her up. She covers her face with her hands and breaks forth into uncontrollable sobs.

Jesus speaks. "God's peace be unto thee, thou daughter of Abraham. Thy sins may be many, but they may all be forgiven. Go, and sin no more."

The old Chazzan, who had started forward, elbowing his way through the crowd, is near enough to hear these words of Jesus, and his amazement is turned into wrath; words of fierce denunciation spring to his lips, but, looking around upon the stern, rapt faces about him, he wisely holds his peace. These wild shepherds of the mountains and these turbulent fishermen might tear him in pieces at a word: he will reserve his strictures for a more favorable occasion.

And now from the direction of the dais, where Jesus is to preach, comes the sound of tumult, and a woman's voice rises at intervals above the uproar, like the scream of a fife above the roar of trumpets. For an instant we see Jesus' attention attracted by the sound, and a look of pain and questioning speaks in his face; then he moves on, making no further pause. By pushing our way vigorously, we are able to keep near to Jesus, and come out at last at the foot of the dais.

Meantime the noise and tumult have ceased, and when we arrive at the dais, the helpless crowd is gazing silently at an object on the platform that makes us shudder, and grow sick at heart. A woman, closely veiled but in scant and indecent dress and unattended, lolls, sprawling, on a bench of the platform; but as Jesus draws near she springs to her feet, and with still some reminiscence of the grace of youth reels off a Bacchanalian dance, twanging wildly a battered tambourine and singing, in an unnaturally high key, one of Anacreon's most filthy songs.

In common with the hushed crowd around us, we feel, and know not why, that it is an awful moment. We almost cease to breathe, and our hearts stop beating, as in deadly fear. Who and what is this fearsome thing, and what will Jesus do! For a moment even he seems stunned and overwhelmed. The veins upon his brow swell and throb, and he puts out a trembling hand to steady himself against the baluster. He pauses and his lips move. He closes his eyes a moment, and then he passes on; but the look of agony does not pass, the great vein on his brow still swells and throbs, and his face about the nose and mouth is lined and drawn.

But he mounts to the low platform with a firm step and a tranquil eye, as if knowing well what he will do. Of the twenty thousand eyes fixed upon him he is entirely oblivious: he is intent only on this demoniac outcast who has come here to mock and defy him. While

he looks calmly upon her, she continues her wild gyrations and obscene posturings, with the singing and the violent beating of her tambourine, but with her face still covered and without taking any notice of the presence of Jesus.

At last Jesus raises his hand and speaks to the woman. We cannot hear what he says; but as if smitten with a spell, the woman stops short and turns and looks at Jesus. Through the openings of her veil we catch a glimpse of wild, staring, black eyes that thrill like an electric shock. An instant Jesus and the woman stand thus, looking straight into each other's eyes.

Then with a cry the woman casts herself at Jesus' feet, clasping them with her hands and bathing them with her tears. Again Jesus speaks to the woman, but in low tones and words intended only for her. After a time, when the woman's sobs have become less violent, Jesus stoops and raises her up. Again their eyes meet, and the woman, gathering her rags and tatters about her, comes down from the platform and, regarding no one, sits down on the ground.

To the discourse which followed the woman listened, without visible sign. Jesus made no allusion to her. He read for his text the twentieth and thirty-fourth chapters of Job, and his discourse consisted, as with John, largely of denunciation of the rich and great and threatenings of coming vengeance.

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RACHEL'S LETTER.

Rachel, the daughter of Nicodemus, at
Chorazin, to her father at Jerusalem.

"I must begin my letter to you, my dear father, by confessing that in writing I am disobeying. No, not disobeying, for that I could *never* do,—but evading your instructions to retire early to bed. But I am so sure that you would approve, or at least allow, this exception that I

dare to make it. I could not sleep if I were in bed. My mind has been so wrought up by the events of the day,—and then the messenger to Jerusalem goes early to-morrow morning, and I cannot let him go without sending you some word of what is passing here.

“You remember how we were impressed with the preaching of John the Baptist at Jordan and how he spoke of one who was to come after him, and whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose. Well, that One whom John foretold has appeared here since John was in prison, and I have seen and heard him. Much as we admired and were astonished at John, he did not prophesy wrong when he said that a greater was to come. This new preacher is called Jesus, and is reported to be originally of Nazareth, though some say that he has lived mostly in the deserts with John and the Essenes. He does dress like the Essenes, such as we often see at Jerusalem,—all in pure white and without head covering, and with long hair and beard like the Nazarites; and some again say he *is* a Nazarite, like John.

“It is impossible to know the truth about this man, I fear, for *everything* is said of him. Indeed one poor, wretched looking man in the market place to-day screamed out, calling him the Messiah and the son of David, while Uncle Heber, who is very angry with Jesus for what he calls his heathenish doctrines and practices, declares that he is a wizard and possessed of a devil. But Uncle Heber says the same of John, and declares that both he and this Jesus should be stoned according to the law of Moses. He thinks their preaching, if allowed to go on, will destroy the synagogue and end all worship at Jerusalem.

“But whoever this Jesus is, he has created an excitement here that is beyond anything you can imagine. Uncle Heber says there are ten thousand strangers now in Chorazin, and more coming in all the time,—rough,

outlandish men, it is true, but they are all Jews, and they are all very much in earnest about something. Uncle Heber says they are all vile Amhaartz, ready to follow any artful demagogue, and at a word from Jesus would march on Tiberias or Jerusalem and attack the soldiers there with their bare hands, which could only end in massacre and make the Romans harder upon our nation than ever.

“Of course I don’t know about these things, but I am quite sure that this Jesus himself is a good man. None of God’s creatures, man or animal, *can*, I believe, look upon him without feeling that he is good, that he is their friend. Even Uncle Heber admits that this is so, and that he was himself impressed that way at first; but he says now that it was a sorcerer’s spell that Jesus threw around him. It is impossible to convey in words the effect this man has on people by his mere presence, and more by his words, his looks, his manner, and the tone of his voice. You must come yourself and see, before you can ever knew the half.

“I was quite near to him this morning when he took up and healed a poor wretched woman of the street who had cast herself down before him. It is truly presumptuous for me to attempt to describe anything at all about this man, for, as I said, words fail altogether. The first impression of the man is of goodness, sweetness, innocence, as of a little child. He looks straight into your eyes with the trusting, open, inquiring gaze of a child; and yet you are pierced by it, as by a dart. *You feel that he is looking at your very soul.* But you are not alarmed, for, as I said, your whole impression of the man is goodness; and if he does look into your soul and judges it, you know that he will be kind. And so I think Uncle Heber is altogether wrong in thinking that this Jesus will incite men to war or violence of any kind.

“The effect of his preaching, even though he is very

hard on the rich and the great and even the priests, is, very curiously, of a nature that makes everybody cry rather than fight. He makes the sins of men appear so sad a thing that before you know it your tears are flowing, — and not bitter, hopeless tears, either, for somehow he makes you feel hopeful and joyful, and your tears are glad tears. Everyone was in tears when he ceased speaking, and old men embraced each other because they were so glad.

“Uncle Heber complains that women go wild over him, and some rich women, he says, are at charges to keep him nicely clothed and fed. It may well be, for, so different from John, who was really dirty and repulsive in his dress and appearance, Jesus is clothed neatly and becomingly, though simply, and his hair and beard shining with oil and very beautiful, instead of being matted and uncombed, as John’s was. Now do not think that *I* have gone wild over this man, but at the same time I can well see how a woman might deem it a happiness to die for him.”

(Later.) “I was called off from my writing by a variety of strange sounds, and have been sitting at my window, which overlooks the market place and the great wharf, for an hour, listening and looking. Though it is now past the second watch, the city is astir as at sunset. There are lights everywhere, and singing and music of instruments. Then a considerable company, just landed at the wharf (as I heard one say, from in and about Golan), went singing beneath my window. And besides, on the housetop right over my head are Uncle Heber and all the rulers of the synagogue, consulting what to do about Jesus.

“They are as much excited as the common people are, though in a very different way. And so altogether, you can see why I cannot sleep; and since I cannot, I may as well relate another incident in to-day’s proceedings, that,

because I don't much understand it, I had thought to let pass. You remember when we were at Jordan there was a woman of very distinguished appearance with the company of Honorius from Tiberias.

"*You* noticed her, and found on inquiry that she was a Jewess who had gone astray. You said that she was hopelessly lost. Well, it appears that this woman, who is called Mary of Magdala, became converted, or at least convicted, by John's preaching, and offered herself for baptism, and was refused and turned away by John because she was, of course, unclean. When turned away by John, she did not go back to Honorius, but came here to Chorazin and became such a monster of sin that Uncle Heber says she had seven devils. She gave great trouble at the synagogue, and everywhere. Well, to-day, as Jesus was coming to the raised place where he was to speak, this woman stepped on before him, and began dancing heathenish dances, and singing heathenish songs, such as she had learned at Rome and Antioch, where she has been with Honorius.

"Of course no one dared touch her, because she is possessed with devils, and so she was going on at a dreadful rate when Jesus came. At first even he seemed to fear and tremble before the woman, and the evil spirit possessing her appeared to be stronger even than he. I was quite near, and I was really frightened by the awful look on Jesus' face, and he had to support himself by grasping hold of the baluster. It was a terrible scene, and I came near fainting away. But Jesus rallied after an instant, and still with the awful look on his face went straight towards the woman, and made some magical sign over her with his hand, at the same time speaking certain words and fixing his eyes steadfastly upon her. At once the woman ceased her devilish performances and fell at Jesus' feet, crying and sobbing like a child.

"Then Jesus took hold of her, vile and unclean as she

was, and he a great Rabbi, and lifted her up; and she at once went quietly away and sat down on the ground, like a slave woman. Now I know it is not meet for a young girl like me to dispute or argue with my elders, like Uncle Heber; but it is something that you, my father, may and will think about. This man Jesus is certainly performing miracles,—Uncle Heber does not deny that. And the question is, whence has he this power? Uncle Heber says that he gets his power of Satan, and that he uses spells and incantations learned of heathen Egyptians or Babylonians. I should have accepted this explanation without question, had I not overheard Rabbi Zechariah last night telling Uncle Heber that King Solomon and King Hezekiah both possessed secret words and spells by which they could command not only devils but cherubim and angels of God. He said that it was believed by many learned Rabbis that the signet ring of King Solomon was possessed by King Hezekiah, and is still in existence somewhere, and that whoever finds it and learns how to use it will command spirits, just as King Solomon did. You have read and studied much of these things and will know better what to believe.

“The company on the housetop over my head has at last broken up, and the singing and noise in the market place has ceased, though I still see some moving lights; and there are ships arriving at the wharf, as I can now see by the light of the moon, which has risen over the far-off hills. The world is very beautiful as I look out upon it from my window.

“You remember the orange and almond trees near the fountain in Uncle Heber’s garden, which you admired so much. The almonds are in fruit now and the orange trees in full bloom. The odor of their blossoms comes in at my windows and fills my room with delicious fragrance. And then the lake, spread out before me with its ever changing views, is a never ending delight,—its lights and shadows

under the moon and the stars, its placid sleep, its wild tossings, its mysterious depths. Now it is still, and as smooth as glass, and the moonlight upon it makes it glitter like a sheet of silver. At this moment I see in the gilded pathway, with its background of purple hills, two ships coming in. Their sails hang loose and useless, and I can see the lift of oars and the sheen and sparkle of the water as they dip and lift; and then faintly across the water I catch the sound of voices, singing that grand old Psalm you love so well, 'Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered.'

"It is all very beautiful, and late as it is, I am loath to leave it and go away to sleep and forgetfulness. The events of the day have been so strange and wonderful, and there is such a fascination about this man Jesus I can not stop thinking about him. They say he spends whole nights alone on the mountains! Perhaps he is there now, sleepless like me, so lonely and solitary and mysterious. O my father, do come and see and hear this man for yourself, and tell me what to believe. Salute Naanah and Abigail for me, and receive for yourself a good-night kiss from your perplexed but loving daughter.

"Dear Father, good-night.

RACHEL.

"Morning! I have slept a sweet sleep, and dreamed such a beautiful dream. I will tell it you when you come, for I shall never forget it. If Varus inquires for me, tell him — well — tell him what you please: it matters not. If we could only convert him to be a Jew, it would help our nation, would it not? But the messenger comes.

"Again, good-bye!

RACHEL."

XXXIV

ALONE

"And when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray, and when the evening was come, he was there alone."—Matthew xiv-23.

When Jesus had ended his discourse, he withdrew himself as soon as possible thereafter and, unknown even to his disciples, set out alone to seek solitude and repose in the mountains.

It had been Jesus' life-long habit to be much alone, and now since his public ministry began he found solitude more than ever necessary to his life. The incessant demands and prying curiosity of the unrestrained and inconsiderate mob left him no leisure or privacy, and little time even for needed sleep. Even his chosen disciples, with that naïve obtuseness so strangely exhibited on many occasions, so far from protecting him from the unconscionable demands of the crowd, were themselves often guilty of inconsiderate intrusion. They regarded his solitary wanderings and musings with a mingled feeling of superstitious awe and pert curiosity. And so not only for secret communion with God and his own soul was Jesus compelled to seek mountain solitudes, but from the sheer necessity for rest and recuperation.

He had now no home, no place where he could be secure from the intrusions of curiosity or even of enmity. He had not, as he said, "where to lay his head." He began to think of the foxes whose holes he had known so well when a boy, and the birds in their nests, with envy. He longed for a place, if it were only a cave in the rocks, like Addi's, where he might rest in peace.

On this occasion he had separated himself from every-

one, and started away for the hills without plan for going to any particular place. He only wanted to escape from the intolerable stress and burden of the crowd and to be alone. It was the end of a week of exhausting effort. To-morrow was the Sabbath, and he knew that if he remained in the city he would find no rest.

And so, with the descending sun sinking towards the western hills, we find him walking westward towards Cana. He had not thought of going to Cana, but when, from a turn in the path, he caught sight of the blue hills where he had spent some of childhood's happiest hours, and where, O God! he had dreamed Youth's dream — and seen Youth's vision,— a dream and a vision such as the heaven-born only know,— when the thoughts of these things, mingling as they did with that wild nightmare of the day, came over him, he forgot for the moment his high ideal of the Son of God, and became again a poor, heart-wrung, bitter, and homesick Son of Man.

A thousand thoughts crowded thick upon him, and alas! they were only worldly, selfish thoughts, so discouraging to his lofty ideals that they made him faint and sick at heart. A little rocky glen came in here upon the path, and Jesus, turning aside into it, lay down on a flowery bank. Upon him, as upon us all, the arch enemy was descending in a moment of exhaustion and weakness, when the armor had grown too heavy, and the sword was broken in his hand. Jesus did not remember that he had eaten nothing since the early morning. He only felt that he was possessed by thoughts and desires which were selfish and worldly, and that he was powerless to put them away.

The meeting with Mary in such a tragic way had blown the buried spark of human passion into an alarming blaze. The old feeling of hatred against those who had so wronged and desecrated her was again flaming dangerously up, and there was the old Jewish thirst for vengeance. Jesus was not deceived about the root and cause of this

feeling: he knew full well that Mary by no possibility, could be to him more than a friend, and yet he felt himself helpless and drifting before this fierce sirocco blast of human passion that he had thought extirpated.

What did it all mean! Jesus had already realized to the full that neither in mother nor sisters nor brethren nor disciples nor even in John had he any true sympathizer or friend, such as the human heart, however pure and exalted it may be, instinctively longs for. Even his mother, whom he tenderly loved, had looked coldly upon him and rebuked him for what she thought was his apostasy. His kindred all looked upon him as at least a visionary dreamer and a possible demoniac. Nor by his disciples nor John was he better understood: they could conceive of no loftier goal than a return to Moses and a restoration of the Kingdom to Israel.

Companionless and alone in this world Jesus knew himself to be, and his will had accepted this condition with cheerful fortitude. He had resolved that persons or things should be nothing to him: he would bury every earthly affection in the one all-embracing love of human kind. But with Jesus, as with every other inspired man, every other son of God, his will was but the bond-servant of his soul, and in the awful presence of that uproused, primeval "Flame Image," his will faltered and drew back. The primary, underived, and uncreated,—the *Natural*,—was asserting itself within him. He found himself longing for companionship, his complement, his true mate. He had thought to tread the wine press alone, but the burden was crushing him. There had been that in Mary before her fall that had appealed to him as a kindred soul; his love for her had been darkened by no conscious tinge of mortal taint,—and he could not forget.

Now, in his utter loneliness, his heart yearned towards Mary, not indeed as a husband or lover, but as the heart of man yearns for its mate,—as Adam, lonely in the

splendors of Paradise, yearned for Eve. Jesus was scarcely conscious of this feeling. Pity, a tender, loving pity for the poor wretch who had wet his feet with her tears that day, was the feeling towards her that seemed uppermost in his mind and heart. But his pity was illumined and glorified by hope. He knew, for his heart told him, that Mary was a new creature. The miracle of a new heart had been given her, and she was no more as she had been. She was the first true fruit of his ministry; through her he already had, with increasing light, a broader, deeper view. Filled with such thoughts, vaguely looming before him, Jesus was entirely unconscious of his surroundings.

Suddenly a bird in an almond tree near by began singing a song so joyous, sweet, and clear that Jesus' attention was arrested by it. He marked the beautiful color and form of the bird's plumage, and noted the tone and volume of its song, and how its throat swelled and quivered, and its whole form seemed to dilate and aspire with an inward, irresistible stress. Then again, at an instant, Jesus became aware of the infinite depth of blue overhead. Lying on the grass, he was looking straight up into it, and the thought came to him of Infinitude,—Infinite Space! Was there really no end? And if an end, what was beyond the end!

A cloud, with a dark center, bordered with light and fringed with curling streamers of silver and of gold, was rising slowly from the "chambers of the south." Jesus watched it swell and glow, resting on the deep bosom of the vault of blue till it spread and thinned to a gauzy curtain, a vapor, a mist, and at last was swallowed up as if drawn back into the bosom of the All. Whence did it come, and whither did it go? Was it a type of the spirit of man? Then, all at once, and without any apparent connection, the words came to him, as if from the sky itself, vivid, strong, and clear. "The soul of a man may be

born again." "The soul of a man may be born again!" Jesus sat up and looked around. There was no one in sight. The bird had flown away, and the sun was behind the hill. "THE SOUL OF A MAN MAY BE BORN AGAIN," he repeated aloud. It was a new thought not borrowed from any ancient seer, Hebrew or Pagan, but sent straight from Heaven's Armory to him, to illuminate and renew the world. MARY OF MAGDALA HAD BEEN BORN AGAIN.

It was still early Spring, and even the barley, now green and waving in the fields, was not fit for food; but a neglected grape vine, running over a rocky ledge close by, had on it many clusters of withered but delicious grapes of last season's vintage, and the almond tree overhead was loaded with nuts that might be eaten. Jesus got up and gathered of these as much as he needed to satisfy his hunger, and turning his face again westward, was soon lost to view on the steep path towards Cana.

It was late in the night when Jesus arrived at his old haunt on the high hill above Cana. It was dark, but he had no difficulty in finding the little nook in the rocks where, as a boy, he had often taken shelter for himself and new-born lambs in storms. It seemed so peaceful and restful, he was glad to be there, and words of grateful prayer arose to his lips. But Jesus was so exhausted that his thoughts wandered, his lips faltered, and he was asleep with his prayer unfinished.

After a short sleep, Jesus awoke with a wide-awake consciousness of some one being near. He listened attentively, but there was no movement or sound except a cricket's cry and the far-off bark of a fox. The silence then became profound. He tried to compose himself to sleep again. But down the mountain's path he heard a footstep on the stones, and a sound as of a human voice. Jesus sat up and looked out. There was a little light of

dawning day, and he could see dimly the figure of a woman approaching from below.

She came slowly and painfully along, and sat down on the ground near the little cave where Jesus was. At first the woman sat in silence, with bowed head, but after a time she began to make the same low moaning sound that Jesus had heard before. It seemed to be only a sound of pain and grief, but as Jesus listened he could distinguish words of prayer. Jesus arose and came forward, and when the woman saw him, she also arose and looked at Jesus, trembling and ready to fall; when he had come quite near, she uttered a low cry and sank down lifeless, like one pierced to the heart by an arrow.

It was a very painful situation for a Jew, and especially for a Rabbi; but Jesus did not hesitate. He moved the woman from the heap in which she had fallen, straightening her limbs and raising her head. He took hold of her hands and began chafing them, for they were quite cold and clammy. By the growing light he could see a little ring of gold on her finger, set with a precious gem, and his heart thrilled when he saw and recognized it to be the one he had given to Mary of Magdala long years ago. The woman wore no other ornament, and was dressed in the coarse garments of a serving-woman.

Jesus continued his efforts to restore the woman to consciousness; and when the day had fully dawned, she opened her eyes and sat up. But when she saw Jesus, she uttered a very bitter cry, and said, "Oh! you must think ill of me for coming here; but the good God in heaven knows I didn't know, I didn't know. Oh! don't think that I knew."

Jesus was very, very sad, but he answered kindly, "Weep not, and be comforted," he said. "Thou needest not fear that I will not understand. I know!"

The woman raised her eyes and met the steadfast gaze of Jesus with a look of mingled wonder, surprise, and

grateful love. At that moment the first beams of the sun, rising above the far-off mountains of Moab, shot across the vast expanse beneath them, silvering the dew-drops on the grass and the lilies at their feet, and glorifying with equal beams the rapt faces of these two children of God, Jesus of Nazareth and Mary of Magdala. Far away beneath them, the still dark valley of the Jordan and the lake lay hid in mists and curling clouds of vapor, with here and there a rising tongue tipped as with fire. In the distant north the mass of cedared Lebanon rose dark, and Hermon's snowy crown was flushed with crimson, amethyst, and gold.

"The world is very beautiful," said Jesus simply. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." Then, after a pause, "And it might be again a paradise as to our father Adam if only the children of men would learn to live together as brothers in unity."

While Jesus was speaking the sound of a ram's horn from a synagogue in some far-off valley came floating faintly upon the still air, and Jesus, turning his face towards Jerusalem, began repeating the morning prayer: "Hear, O Israel! The Eternal, our God, is one eternal God."

For a moment Mary stood hesitating, then, with flowing tears, she joined in the well-known prayer.

XXXVI

ANNAS

"We recall the terrorism which prevented Sanhedrists from taking the part of Jesus, and especially the violence which seems to have determined the final action of the Sanhedrin, against which not only such men as Nicodemus and Joseph, but even a Gamaliel, would feel themselves powerless."—Edersheim.

Jerusalem, like a modern city, was at this time wholly dependent on the country around. As a result of the preaching of John, the crowds attending the great feasts had largely fallen off, and the revenues of lawyers, priests, and doctors were very materially diminished. Many, from inveterate habit and superstitious fear, still came, but it was observed that even these brought but slender offerings and were amazingly disposed to cavil and contend.

In the great Sanhedrin were several men like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea who, by journeyings abroad to Rome, to Alexandria, and even to Athens, and by converse with Greek and Latin scholars, had gained quite advanced and liberal views. Being possessed of considerable wealth, they were not dependent upon the Temple Service for revenue. They were not in full accord with the legal and sacerdotal class, whose worldly and material interests were bound up in the religious observances of the people, and they were not trusted by them. Hence both now and in the last supreme effort to crush forever the reform movement of John and Jesus, the Sanhedrin, as a body, was not called together. A cabal of the few more reckless, determined, and materially interested, was alone consulted by Annas and Caiaphas, and it was this cabal of priests, lawyers, and doctors who were responsible for what finally came to pass.

Indeed, if the reader will call to mind the history of the French Revolution and of the Iconoclasts of Holland, he will see how a few bold and reckless spirits may, in a time of deep and wide-spread excitement, seize the helm of affairs, and make appear as a national movement what is but the frenzy of a few.

The Sanhedrin was never called to pass upon either the character or the conduct of Jesus. As a body it was too Democratic ever to have condemned either Jesus or John. The Rabbi Boethus, who sat at Honorius' table and who interrogated John, and various others of like character were all devout Jews, just as the Borgias and the Medici were devout Catholics. They simply and consistently believed that the practice of Rabbinism at Jerusalem was a good thing — *for them*. Then the authority was in their hands. They possessed the symbols. They would put down, by whatever means, any movement that tended to destroy or set aside Rabbinism, by which they lived. John, and then Jesus, opposed Rabbinism. Therefore John and Jesus must be put away; in short, must die.

There can be no doubt but at least ninety-nine in a hundred, perhaps nine hundred and ninety-nine in a thousand, of the Jews of Palestine were friends of Jesus and of John, and execrated the Atheism, the tyranny, the exactions of the lawyers, priests, and Levites at Jerusalem; but, as already stated, the station and the symbols were with the latter, who accordingly had their way.

And so again we are in Jerusalem, and in the aristocratic quarter on the hill of Zion. It is long after sunset, and the street we are on is narrow and dark, hemmed in by high walls of huge stones, capable of resisting a siege. But the glaring light of flambeaux, borne by slaves, flashes here and there, where some wealthy nabob is being carried along in his luxurious palanquin.

At a broad, open portal, where two stalwart Nubians

stand, one at each side, with flaming torches, there is a glare of light. Beside the torch-bearers, standing grim and silent in the shadow, are a number of mighty men in armor, and beyond, a huge mastiff, chained and muzzled, suggests an additional guard. The open portal appears to offer invitation to enter, and we see the palanquins, one after another, turn in. The transition from the gloomy street to the scene within is like that from a prison to fairy-land. The place is at once a cloistered court and a garden of extreme luxuriance and splendor. It is the palace of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas and the chief ruler of the Jews. A number of his friends, the wealthiest and most influential men of Jerusalem, have been summoned to appear at his house on business of moment.

Following the visitors, we pass through a brilliantly lighted labyrinth of fruits and flowers, fountains, and vine-covered retreats, and mount by polished marble stair-cases through a pillared gallery to the high roof, where, surrounded by indescribable luxury, sits in more than regal splendor the former pontiff and the present real ruler of the Jews.

The effect of this man on world history being so momentous, it may be useful to more particularly mark his appearance. Although he reclines on a divan and rises not to salute his visitors, it is easy to see that he is a man of large mould and commanding presence. Annas is of that class, always sufficiently abundant in the world, who, at an early time, but not the earliest, were the chiefs and champions of tribes. Afterwards they were the leaders of armies, robber barons, and lords of castles set on hills. They figure in all lordly garbs. They have worn the ermine, the cassock, and the stole, and the tiara itself. Later, and latest, they are given the names of Captains of Industry, Kings of Finance, Party Leaders, Bosses.

Annas is an old man now, with a bald head and long,

flowing, white beard, but there is the high, square, beetling brow, the jaw of a mastiff, and a bull's neck set on Herculean shoulders.

Caiaphas is here, too, and demanding, perhaps, as a prominent character in this World Tragedy, some particular notice from us. He is a thin, spare man, of middle age, with the smooth and polished manners of a courtier, but betraying a lurking sense of doubt and hesitancy. We would say that Caiaphas is incapable of convictions; but he acts most admirably the part of host, and receives the aristocratic visitors with a grace and tact born of lifelong practice. He is smooth and suave and accommodating.

Most of the guests are unknown to us, except Gamaliel, and Boethus, and the priest Eliab, whom we heard questioning John at Bethabara. There are six others whose names have been preserved,—Judas, Levi, Alexander, Jairus, and Naphtali. The others are all priests, lawyers, and doctors,—making only fourteen in all. There would not be fourteen but for Annas' superstitious belief in the power of numbers. Annas is deeply learned in cabalistic lore and the number seven and its multiples are things to conjure with.

When the guests are all present Caiaphas dismisses the servants, and Annas, arising to a sitting posture, addresses them. He uses the forms of politeness, but his manner is cold and haughty, as if his words were final and not to be disputed. "Friends and brethren," he says, "it has pleased our worshipful High Priest, Caiaphas, to call you together for purposes known to you all. Alarming reports still come from Galilee and the time has come to act."

Annas paused and waited. No one seemed disposed to answer, but all eyes were turned upon Gamaliel. That noted Rabbi, whose great wealth, learning, and liberal ideas gave him immense influence among the people, was

the only one among those present who had either the inclination or the courage to oppose Annas in anything he might design or propose. At former meetings, where the whole Sanhedrin had been present and the question of disciplining John had been up for discussion, he had disclosed a leaning towards the party of Nicodemus and Joseph that was a surprise to many, and by Annas and Caiaphas was taken almost as an insult; for though Gamaliel was a Pharisee and they were Sadducees, Gamaliel was the chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, and one whose station and influence were as much threatened by the new doctrines as their own.

They had counted upon his support as of course, and deeming it more necessary than that of any other, had hardly dared relinquish it till every effort had been made to gain him over to their views. Hence his being called to this meeting. In truth, Gamaliel was no reformer. In the great excitement about John, he had remained calm and unaffected. He said the only way to put down such "fanatics" was to let them alone. He opposed sending any deputation of Rabbis from Jerusalem to hear him, and was wise enough to see that persecution could avail nothing. In any regular meeting of the Sanhedrin, the influence of Nicodemus, Joseph, and Gamaliel was sufficient to prevent any extreme measures; but Annas, like the modern Boss, was not to be balked by any too nice regard for law or custom. The Sanhedrin was to be ignored, and its slow, methodical, half-hearted opposition defied.

The astute Gamaliel was perfectly aware of all these conditions, and while drawn by nature and conscience to oppose lawless methods, he was equally averse to breaking with the High Priest and that powerful "ring" of unscrupulous politicians and Temple Officials by whom he was supported and surrounded. He resolved to dissemble. "Of course," he said at length, "it is only a question of

methods in this matter. None but the ignorant rabble believes that either John or this Jesus has any authority to speak as they do, and to all present appearance they are doing much harm; and yet there are many of the most honorable of our Rabbis who seem immovably averse to extreme measures. They look upon these new preachers as harmless fanatics, whose folly will soon be apparent to all. There are some who even regard the preaching of John and of this Jesus as upon the whole beneficial. John, as we know, was a strict observer of the Law as he understood it; and both he and Jesus, they claim, call the people to a better way of living, which is a matter of importance to consider, if true. However, whatever the Sanhedrin may decide upon when the matter is laid before it, I, for one, will cheerfully support."

Several of the reverend gentlemen present showed some impatience and even eagerness to answer Gamaliel; but the gravity and decorum becoming to the place and their station was duly observed, and the oldest of the group, Rabbi Jairus, was given first place as spokesman.

"It should be known to you, O most learned Gamaliel," he said, "that action by the Sanhedrin is not now to be depended upon, or even looked for. At the various meetings of that body called to decide upon some action in the case of John of Hebron, the same general conditions were present. The necessity for action was plain and hardly disputed, and yet there were certain members who obstinately refused to sanction any proceedings; it was only by means similar to those now proposed that the country and nation was delivered of that dangerous fanatic. You, most excellent Gamaliel, were present at those meetings, and you cannot be unaware of the futility of calling the Sanhedrin to act upon this matter."

Gamaliel, still unwilling to break with his compeers, now took another tack. "It may be as you say, O friend Jairus, that action in this matter by the Sanhedrin is not

to be expected; but this is a matter of exceeding gravity, as all will admit, and it seems to me but meet that at least more of our wisest and best should be consulted before final action is taken. Surely we should hardly proceed without consulting Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. These, as I understand, are now absent in Galilee for the very purpose of hearing and seeing this Jesus for themselves. This doubtless accounts for their absence here to-night. On their return we may hear their report and be instructed by their wisdom."

By a sign from Annas further discussion was forbidden. Acquiescence in Gamaliel's proposal was apparently yielded, and after an hour spent in general conversation, in which Annas and Caiaphas cheerfully joined, the party broke up, and the two arch conspirators were left alone.

As soon as the company had dispersed, and Gamaliel, like the rest, had been dismissed with salaams and benedictions, the countenance of Annas changed at once from the cheerful friendliness of a host to the scowling blackness of enmity and rage. He began pacing to and fro like a caged lion, gesticulating fiercely and making free use of his tongue in language both angry and threatening.

"What," he cried, shaking his fist fiercely in the face of that supreme and august functionary, the High Priest. "What does the hypocritical dog of a Pharisee think to do by this course! Does the praying, phylactered, fable-monging demagogue think to balk *me*? Has he really gone over to Cræsus — Nicodemus and that sheep-faced Joseph? By Jah and by Jupiter! By Baal and Ash-toreth! By Osiris and Isis! and all the gods at once! These whining philanthropists, these contemptible Buddhist-Essenes, who pretend to have such a tender regard for slaves and Amhaartz, shall see before long who is master here!"

Caiaphas, with Annas' fist under his nose, begged his irate father-in-law to have patience and calm himself.

"No danger," he said, "of Gamaliel going over to the party of Nicodemus. He doesn't love those people any better than he does us. But he is a trimmer, that's all! He's a trimmer."

"Trimmer, indeed! I'll trim him, if he shows up in this way much more. Now, you look here," and Annas, who had resumed his pacing to and fro, again squared himself before the meek and obedient Caiaphas. "Do this that I tell you. We'll have done with all Sanhedrins and all consultations of any kind. We are placed here as the guardians and custodians of our most sacred and ancient religion. We owe it to our Nation that it be preserved and handed down to our posterity in all its purity, by whatever means. *We will preserve it.* Now, listen! Have Boethus and Eliab and lawyer Alexander summoned here to-morrow morning. I will answer for the rest. Good night."

Annas threw himself upon his divan, and as soon as he heard the great iron gate close behind Caiaphas, he rang a small silver bell, which was immediately answered by a tall Egyptian eunuch, to whom he communicated his wishes and who soon after brought in on a great silver salver a flagon of Falernian wine, with some rich conserve of figs. Annas then spoke again to the Egyptian, who withdrew, and immediately after a young woman came in, bearing a timbrel. She was elegantly attired in the Greek costume, and in form and feature was evidently of that nation. In obedience to command, she sat down on a low couch near by, and began playing, and singing a song from Sappho.

Annas sipped his wine and listened a short time; then, with an impatient gesture and sharp words, he ordered the girl to stop. "I told you to give me something lively and cheerful, but this is more like a lamentation than a song. What ails you!"

"Music is the heart speaking," she answered. "Sap-

pho herself could not make men merry when her heart was rent."

Annas cast a stern, inquiring glance at the beautiful, sad face of the girl, but asked no questions. "Go, then," he said, "and bring me the copy of Aristophanes from the library. I think that will be more to my liking than your singing."

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The next morning, in the same place, Annas received the three personages whom he had asked to have sent to him the night before,—Boethus, Eliab, and Alexander. Caiaphas was also present. Annas opened the interview by a discourse of some length on the dangers by which true religion was threatened, and the importance of preserving the true religion of their fathers from all taint of schism or heresy.

During this discourse, which, it may be remarked, was adorned with some fine old and oft repeated rhetorical flourishes, Annas preserved a very stern and melancholy cast of countenance, and looked none of his visitors in the eye. They also seemed to have wandering eyes and looked anywhere but at Annas. After this exordium, however, Annas changed his language and likewise his manner. He looked upon his listeners with an eye that fixed and awed like a lion's. He also arose from reclining on his divan, and walked to and fro.

"You all must see, and I think you do," he was saying, "that the very fabric of our institutions is threatened; the means by which we live are to be taken away; and it behooves us, as keepers and custodians of the Law, to use any and every means in our power to resist and put down this movement. From Pilate and his Romans we can expect nothing. Nicodemus and Joseph have gained Pilate's ear, and he will listen to nothing we can say. Herod, too, has grown indifferent. He cares no more than Pilate about what concerns us. If only he retains

the favor of Cæsar and is sure of remaining Tetrarch, he cares not what becomes of us. He was prevailed on by his fears of a Zealot uprising to imprison John, but we have sure intelligence that he is coming over to a different view, and intends to liberate John.

“Now you three are all friends of Herod; you are acquainted with Herodias and with Salome. I have heard you tell how John publicly and in your hearing denounced the incestuous marriage of Herod with Herodias, and here are grounds upon which you may work. Incite Herodias against John, and the thing is done: we will be rid of him. You are all sufficiently experienced in this kind of work so as to require no detailed instructions from me. All I have to say is, Go to Herod and do your duty!”

Annas paused, and walked to and fro for some time, as if in deep study. “The case of this Jesus,” he began again at length, “is far more difficult. Our intelligence about him would indicate a man far more dangerous than John. He is not so bold, and is more crafty; and if he uses craft, so also must we. My instructions are, after you have done for John as indicated, Go into Galilee, and mingle with the crowd that attend upon Jesus; pretend to be interested in his preaching; attach yourselves to him, and as if you were disciples seeking instruction ask him questions, without too much contradicting him. See that he is invited to the best houses, and entertained as if he were the greatest man in the nation. Flatter him. They say he does not refuse wine and generous fare, and likes music, and admires beauty in women. Ply him with these things.

“Let the rich men in the cities understand how the matter stands, and they will act with you heartily. And don’t neglect the employment of wine and *women especially*. Get the best, and spare no expense. Remember it is easier to corrupt this insane preacher than it is to

fight him openly; and in the meantime don't forget to draw him out, and get him to say something before witnesses that we can make out to be criminal. *Above all draw him towards Jerusalem.* Once get him within these walls, and trust us to put an end to his heresy."

XXXVII

FISHERTON

"Bethsaida [translated Fisherton] was the fishing quarter of, or, rather, close to Capernaum, even as we so often find, in our own country, a 'Fisherton' adjacent to larger towns."—Edersheim.

After several weeks we are again at Bethsaida (Fisherton), and at the house of Zebedee. It is evening time, and Zebedee, with his partner Jonas, is sitting on a rude bench some distance away from the house. They have been at work all the afternoon mending their net, but it has now grown too dark for them to continue with that task, and the net has dropped from their tired hands to their feet, where it lies in brown masses of woven string and cordage.

"The rotten old thing is, as you say, hardly worth the labor of mending any more," said Jonas, spurning it with his foot, "but I know not where the money is to come from to buy new. We will have to make it go for a while longer, I suppose."

Something like a sigh escaped from Zebedee, and he reached down and took up some of the net in his hand. "Knitting this was the last work Father did," he said, passing his hand over the rough knots, almost caressingly. "It has done us good service, brother Jonas, and I wish it was so we could buy new and lay this away for the good it *has* done."

While Zebedee was speaking, a pleasant female voice from the house, close by, called out, "Uncle Zebedee, shall I bring supper for you and Uncle Jonas to eat where you are, or will you come in?"

"Oh, bring us here what you have, my dear," answered Zebedee, "and come you; and tell your mother and Salome

to come, too. Jonas is not here to eat with us often, and let us all eat together to-night."

Jonas arose and made some objections to staying, but was persuaded to sit down again.

There was a confused sound of women's voices from the direction of the house, and then the same voice as before called out, "Mother says she can't come now, Uncle Zeb-dee."

"Why not?" asked Zeb-dee.

"Why, she says she can't leave her work."

"Work! What work?" again asked Zeb-dee.

Then after a pause, during which they could hear the women talking in low tones, "She says the fish are not all cleaned yet."

"Whoever saw such a woman," said Zeb-dee aside to Jonas; then calling back again, he cried, "Tell your mother to let the fish go. We want her to come and eat with us."

Then again, after a sound of more talking at the house, the same voice calling, "She says they will spoil."

"Well, let them spoil! Tell her to come anyway," shouted Zeb-dee. Then turning to Jonas he went on: "Did you ever see such a woman as that sister of mine? Because I have given her and Doris the shelter of my poor roof when Shunem sold them out she seems to think that she owes me more than she can ever pay. That Shunem has done many bad things: but selling them out of their old home was about the worst he ever did."

"Yes, and Joseph was a mighty fine man,—industrious, too, a good carpenter, and worked early and late," answered Jonas. "Strange that they should have had such vagabond boys,—to let their old home be sold out for taxes."

"Nay, but thou shouldst not call them by that hard name, brother Jonas; for a vagabond, as I take it, is a bad, worthless fellow, and these sons of Mary are not that,

brother Jonas. No, not so bad as that; and it was but a little while ago that thou wast calling one of their sons the greatest man in the world."

"Oh, they are all smart enough; they are no fools," answered Jonas "But nothing 'll excuse a widow's sons for letting their mother be turned out of her home. I wouldn't 'a' thought it o' Jesus, anyway. I'd 'a' thought that he would 'a' done something to save the old home. Jude,—of course there was not much to be expected of him, nor of James, with the family he has of his own,—and him a thinking all the while that his mother and sister, and all, should be like him, Essenes. Of course he couldn't do much to help his mother; but Jesus could, if he had tried. We've all been disappointed in Jesus."

"Yes, it's all a sad business, and a dreadful mix-up generally," answered Zebedee, with a sigh that was almost a groan, "and I don't see what's to come of it all. Yes, it cannot be denied Jesus has disappointed us all. If things were to go on here as they have for the past three months, we would have to give up everything and go hire ourselves to Simon, the Pharisee, to dig in his vineyards." Jonas made no answer, and after a pause Zebedee went on.

"Yes, I have seen it some time and that's one thing that makes Mary work as she does, and deny herself everything but bread and water. Our boys, following after her son Jesus, have done no work now for a long time; and yet they come around with a lot of idle ragamuffins and expect to be fed."

"Yes, it's the same at my house," answered Jonas, dolefully. "And now Simon's wife and children and his poor, old mother-in-law are on my hands. Of course we make them welcome, as you do your sister Mary and Doris. But you know how it is: it's no way to live; and with the fish all gone into deep water, and no help but wandering

Canaanites and Samaritans, who steal more than they earn, its pretty hard getting on. We'll have to make the old nets do as long as they'll hold together; and then if our sons keep up this idle running about, and come no more home to work, why, you and I will have to do as I say, and go to work in Simon's vineyards at a penny a day, for that's what they say he and Hippo are paying now. There's so little a-doing and so many idle fellows about that a penny a day is all one can get."

"Oh, I know it! I know it all!" groaned Zebedee, "and more and worse than that! I haven't told you the worst." As if reluctant to go on, Zebedee sat for some time in silence and Jonas did not press him. At length Zebedee straightened up, as if to face whatever came, and went on: "I could stand to have the boys go as they have. They are young, and would have to go for themselves before long, anyway. But Salome," and the old man choked down a sob, "you didn't know, but it's true, — Salome is one of them, and wanted to go off with them now, she and Joanna, Chuza's wife, and Susanna. They are all crazy to follow Jesus and be with him, like our boys, and they would all have gone now this time, if Jesus would have let them; but he had sense enough to forbid them altogether. But he only put them off: he said, 'Some other time you can go, but not now.' I heard the whole thing, for they were all here at my house,—and all but Mary and Doris were eager to follow Jesus anywhere, and *they* went out into the garden alone by themselves and cried."

"You say that Joanna and Susanna want to go with Jesus?" asked Jonas. "They think they were cured of something by him, don't they?"

"Yes," answered Zebedee, doubtfully. "Their husbands, you know, are rich, and they, having no children but one and nothing to do, thought they were sick; and

they think Jesus healed them. They are all right now, and full of life as can be. Jesus cured your Simon's wife of fever, too, didn't he?"

"It certainly did seem so," Jonas replied; "the woman was very sick, and we all thought she would die; and Jesus, by just his word, raised her up, and for two or three days she seemed quite well. But since Jesus has gone, she has got worse and, I think, will die."

"Oh, Jesus is truly a wonderful man, and it's such a pity he couldn't turn his talents to some good account," rejoined Zebedee.

"Even as a carpenter he might have become famous, for I heard Rabbi Sadduc say —." Jonas had got so far in telling what Jesus' old master in carpentry had said, when he was interrupted by the appearance of the young woman whose voice had sounded from the house, and who now proceeded with some bustle to prepare for the evening meal.

"It is too bad to keep you and Uncle Jonas waiting so long," she said, with animation, "but Mother would have her way, and the fish are all cleaned and put away at last. But, Uncle Zebedee, Aunt Salome says there is no wine, and asks if she shall send to the wine-shop for some for supper."

"Certainly, of course. We can not well do without wine, especially now that Jonas is here. You are young and spry, Doris! You could run now quick and bring us a bottle! That is a good girl."

Doris had brought a lamp when she came, and the light as she held it in her hands shone full in her face, which now showed some embarrassment. She hesitated as if not knowing what to reply, but finally said, with downcast eyes, "But Aunt Salome says there is no money. What shall we do about that?"

The easy good-nature of Zebedee seemed a little damped by this disclosure, but he rallied quickly and said, "Oh,

have it charged; of course old Yinnon knows me, and my father before me. And be sure and get the best, Doris. Now that Jonas is here we can afford a bottle of Engedi, Doris. And so run now quick."

Doris sat down her lamp on a small table near by, and went hurriedly away. Immediately after, the other woman spoken of as Salome came with various preparations of food, which she placed on the table, going and coming as the case required, but without speaking. Although a matron with grown children, Salome, like Doris, whom Zebedee still calls a girl, appears young and very fair to look upon. But unlike Doris, who is simple and quite forgetful of self, Salome impresses us as being very self-conscious, and wears an expression somewhat more proud and haughty than would seem to comport with her station.

The meal was very simple and plain,—fish from the lake, black barley bread without butter, raw onions and lettuce from the garden, ripe figs from the tree over their heads: this, with the rich, heavy blood-red wine brought by Doris, made up the repast. It was a beautiful night; and as they sat eating and drinking leisurely, the big moon rose cloudless above the far-away mountains, lighting up the lake and the shore with a wondrous soft glow. Then out of the shadow to the southward came suddenly into the clear moonlight one of Hippo's large fishing boats, propelled swiftly and smoothly along by a great number of oars. The sight seemed to arouse Zebedee to wrath, and he began to exclaim angrily against Hippo and his new devices for catching fish. While he was speaking, there came a step on the gravel, and Jude was among them. Mary and Doris arose and kissed him demurely, while Zebedee and Jonas greeted him heartily.

"Sit down, sit down!" cried Zebedee. "Thou'rt doubtless hungry, and here's bread and meat, and what's more, some good red wine of Engedi. Thou seest little

wine where thou hast been, either red or white, I doubt."

Jude sat down in silence, and began eating voraciously.

"Hast thou been long fasting?" his mother asked at length.

"Well, I left the caves two days ago," he answered evasively; "but I have not suffered: the wild figs are plenty."

"Pour thy brother another cup of wine, Doris," said Zebedee, "and when he has drunk it, perhaps he will tell us how it fares with Jacobus and the rest."

"And with Jesus," broke in Doris, unable longer to restrain herself. "Did you see Jesus?"

Jude drank off his wine slowly, and did not answer.

"Did you see Jesus?" repeated Doris, while Mary and Salome, though discreetly silent, hung upon his words.

"Yes, I saw Jesus," Jude answered at last, sternly; then turning to Zebedee and Jonas, he went on, but still gloomily: "It's about as you said all the time, Uncle Zebedee; there's nothing to be done at present, and I wash my hands of the whole business. I'm ready to come home and go to work. Now that John is dead, even Jacobus is more discouraged than I ever saw him before. He still has some faint hopes of Jesus, but I know that there is nothing there. Jesus, in my opinion, is possessed,—he has a devil, and we, as a family, ought to do any way we can to get him home and take care of him, and even use force if necessary. Jesus is not only wrong but foolish. There is no sense in what he says, and no plan in what he does. Just to think what insane folly! Preaching a New Kingdom, he yet says, 'Oh no, Herod's rule must not be interfered with: obey the laws, and even suffer death rather than resist!' And of the priests and rulers at Jerusalem I have heard him say time and again, 'Do as they bid you: they sit in Moses' seat, and whatever they bid you do, do.' Now what can any sensible person make out of such doctrine as that! What would Moses

say of it, or the prophet Samuel, or King David! Why, it is sheer lunacy,—the talk of one possessed! And as naturally follows, none of the people who run after him have any understanding of what he is at,—for the very good reason that he doesn't know himself. Our foolish brethren, James and John and Simon and the rest, who are with him now, know no more. All they can say is that the kingdom is shortly to be restored to Israel: they have no idea how."

Jude paused and took another sip of wine, and Zebedee, addressing his wife, cried out, "There, Salome! What have I told you all along! Don't you see it's just as Jude says? His own mother and all his brothers and sisters see it and why can't you? Give up your idle notions and let's try and get Jesus home to us, and take care of him."

Salome made no reply, and Jude went on again, denouncing Jesus and giving many instances and details. Soon Mary and Doris were weeping silently, and Salome, with shining eyes and fixed, rigid face, listened intently. When at length Jude came to a pause, Salome broke in.

"I believe that Jesus is a prophet of God and that what he says will come true," she said.

"And you still purpose to break up our household and go traipsing about the country with that herd of crazy ragamuffins, do you?" cried Zebedee, with rising wrath.

"I shall go with my sons, and obey my Lord and Master, whatever he says," answered Salome.

It was a bold and rebellious act for a Jewish wife, and it cost the poor woman a struggle; her lips quivered, and her face was drawn and white.

"And when Jesus' own mother and all his brothers and sisters hold him to be possessed!" cried Zebedee. "Is not that so, Mary?"

Mary, so addressed, burst into a passion of tears, crying out bitterly, "Oh, I fear it is so! I fear it is so!

O my son, my son!" And Mary and Doris bowed their heads on their hands and wept.

Poor Zebedee, impulsive, passionate, and by nature kindly and light-hearted, was sorely troubled by the gloomy faces, the tears and sobs of those about him. His little supper with friends, with wine and jollity, was turning into bitterness and mourning. What should he do?

"O you, Mary and Doris," he said cheerily, "dry your tears. Things may not be half so bad as we think. We must remember what our Jesus, with all his whimsies, really is: not only a learned Rabbi, able to argue with the wisest of them all, but really the most lovable man in every way that any of us ever knew; and then as to his miracles,—to be sure, none of us have seen any of them, but they all do say that he has the secret and the power which only prophets and great Rabbis possess.

"So let us keep our souls in patience and see what comes. Perhaps this flight into Perea will teach them all something. Our boys, I reckon, ours as well as yours, will long more than once for a bit of their mother's broiled fish and some figs from the old tree. It may be they'll all come home wiser and better. Now isn't that so, Mary? Come then, cheer up, and drink your cup of wine. You haven't touched it yet, and no wonder you are downcast."

XXXVIII

THE IDEAL

"The black spot in our Sunshine is the Shadow of ourselves."—Sartor Resartus.

"These are examples of Reason's momentary grasp of the sceptre: the exertions of a power which exists, not in time or space, but an instantaneous, instreaming, causing power."—Emerson.

Some time has passed since we last saw Jesus, and now, with a considerable company of disciples and followers, he has begun that itinerary of preaching in cities and villages which is to end at last in Jerusalem and at Calvary. The coldness and even the active opposition with which he had been received in Capernaum and other cities induced Jesus to turn to country villages and rural populations. Here he was welcomed with gladness, and here he spent the greater part of his ministry.

One night the company camped in one of those beautiful ravines that make down from the mountains of Gilboa, near to Bethshan. Though an out-of-the-way place, Bethshan was a considerable city in Jesus' time, and anciently was much greater. When the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and his sons to its massive walls, it was a great city, and a mighty stronghold. It was in a country swarming with population, mostly farmers and farm laborers; for the fruitful valley of Jezreel stretched away from it westward to Carmel, and the garden-plain of Esdraelon was at its feet.

Not far away, on a high hill near to Endor, was an ancient shrine or Mazar, still much resorted to by the people. An ancient Hittite grove and altar were there when Saul went to consult the witch of Endor. The people, though mostly Jews, were much given to superstitions and even to idolatrous practices, as their fathers had been

from the beginning. The Jehovah whom they worshiped at Jerusalem was verily superior to all other gods, but he was not sole and only. The ancient and original gods of the country had not been entirely expelled, any more than the original inhabitants. The great King at Jerusalem might rule over all the land, but still there might be constant cause for fear of raids and incursions from the wild Arabs of the desert. In a proper case it was wise to propitiate the heathen invader with gifts and tribute-money.

The present occasion was typical of many other similar ones in Jesus' ministry. All the twelve apostles were present at this time, and several women of Jesus' acquaintance, among whom were Susanna and Joanna, and his aunt Salome, and Mary Magdalene. All lived in tents or slept in the open air, after the same manner that the people were accustomed to in going up to the feasts at Jerusalem. The women prepared the food, and washed the dishes and the clothes, and looked after the mending, as in our own day.

Mary Magdalene, as we have said, was present, but was not admitted to fellowship by the other women. Because Jesus honored her and forbade any harshness towards her, she was distantly tolerated, but by those thousand little arts in which women excel, Mary was given to know that an impassable gulf was fixed between her and them. Mary accepted the humiliating position assigned her without complaint and without bitterness. She performed the meanest drudgery with unassuming cheerfulness, and in all ways conducted herself so wisely and modestly as to win her way to full acceptance by every male disciple; but to the last she was held at a distance by her more severe and jealous sisters. On this occasion, Jesus had designed to go into the city of Bethshan and preach in its synagogue, as he frequently did when practicable. But while he and his disciples were eating their breakfast, word was brought that a great multitude of people was already gathering and would be far too great for any synagogue to hold. And

so Jesus remained, and received the people in the open air. Except in the synagogues Jesus avoided giving a formal sermon. Preaching to large audiences was an innovation introduced by John, of which Jesus never fully approved and finally abandoned, as he did John's baptism and much else which he had at first adopted. His favorite mode of teaching was that of the Jerusalem Rabbis, who sat and answered the questions of disciples, and amplified and explained.

After Jesus had eaten his late breakfast and given thanks, he called the people to draw near and join with him in singing the one hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm, which was a part of the regular Jewish Hallel or Ritual. But except the women, and John and Matthew of his own immediate followers, and a few old men and women in the crowd, no one could sing with him; they had not learned.

When Jesus' eye swept over that huge mass of fellow Jews, sons of Abraham, so densely ignorant and brutish in appearance, he realized as never before how great was the work he had undertaken. They were nearly all laborers and farm-drudges,—rude, excitable, and superstitious,—in every sense an unclean multitude. Many of them were half washed, or clothed like John either with a skin or a coarse single garment of camel's-hair. They were mostly bareheaded, unwashed, with tangled, shaggy beards, and long snaky hair. They were serfs of the soil. They owned no land, not even the wretched hovels in which they lived. All belonged to the rich landlords, who lived in palaces and fared sumptuously every day. The old Mosaic Law, by which land was restored to the original owners in the Jubilee Year, had been explained away by the Rabbis and was no longer in force.

A little group of these Rabbis and rich landowners from the city appeared at this moment on the scene. The crowd made way for them as if they were kings, and they, gathering their robes about them to avoid the least touch of the

“vermin” and “dogs” that composed the multitude, passed haughtily on towards where Jesus was. In their secret hearts they could not but look upon Jesus, who ate and slept and lived with such people on equal terms, with the same scorn and contempt that they had for his followers; but then, as now, the man who controls the multitude, even if he be one “possessed,” was not to be despised, and these crafty old Rabbis were experienced dissemblers.

And so they now approached Jesus with all the ceremonious respect due to a great Rabbi; they addressed him as Master, and remonstrated with him for not coming himself into the city and being entertained in a manner becoming his rank as a great Teacher. These lawyers, doctors, and rich men at this out-of-the-way place had received instructions from the agents of Annas. But instructions had been superfluous; they knew by instinct that to corrupt the People’s champion was easier and more effectual than open opposition. Such tactics have always been employed by the corrupters of the People’s champions, and have seldom failed in all the world’s history. The modern Reformer, sprung from the mine, the work-shop, or the hill-side farm, when he attains to evening dress and after-dinner speeches, begins to see his fellow-laborers in a new light, and tacitly settles down to the conclusion that after all men are not created equal, and there must be classes and, alas, also masses.

Jesus had often before accepted the invitations of the rich, and had partaken cheerfully and heartily of the good things they had to offer; but he had never yielded to their allurements and had not been misled. Now, he received the attentions of these smooth diplomats with serene civility, and invited them to be seated by his side; but they had no desire for so close a relationship and excused themselves. They were, they said, unworthy of such an honor: they came out as pupils to learn of the Great Rabbi. Would he be so kind and condescending as to instruct their igno-

rance in some matters? Jesus was not deceived, but he answered them friendly.

One of the company, a lawyer named Esrom, then said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God, and believest in Moses and the Law. How then is it that thou sayest, Resist not evil, and will allow no man to divorce his wife for any cause?"

These were fair questions and Jesus answered them plainly, and others followed in the same line. He told them frankly that the law of Moses in its technical details was no longer enforced. "Not one of you here to-day," he said, "lives by Moses, and you know it very well. If you would live in the *spirit* of Moses, we might say nothing about the letter. Moses allowed many things to the barbarous, hard-hearted men of his day that was contrary to the general spirit of his teaching. You yourselves are my witnesses. You go to Jerusalem and sit at the feet of a Rabbi who says to you, 'What is hateful to thee, that do not to another,' and this, he says, is the whole Law, and the rest only explanation. And you profess to believe this doctrine. Why, then, do you ask me why I follow not Moses!

"Moses, indeed, allowed our fathers many things. When they came up out of Egypt they were little better than a horde of savages, worshiping golden calves and practicing many Egyptian abominations. Would ye that we go back to Sinai and the desert? In Moses' time there was hardly such a thing as marriage. Those rough fighting men had as many wives as they could steal or carry off, and turned them away to starve and perish when they grew old or displeased them.

"Moses commanded, as a partial reform of this brutality, to give the wife a written bill of divorcement, stating cause and circumstance. But from the beginning it was not so. God made them male and female, and in marriage they twain became one flesh. What God hath joined to-

gether, let not man put asunder. Ye say that for fornication, at least, a man may put away his wife; but I say unto you, for *no cause whatever* may a man put away his wife. The sin of fornication may be as much in the heart as in the act. What man of you hath not looked upon a woman, not your wife, to lust after her! Shall your wife divorce *you*, therefore? By your own words be ye judged, What is hateful to thee, that do not to another. Love and cherish the wife of thy youth, and let that relic of barbarism, divorce, be blotted out forever.” *

There were further question and answer on these lines, and these Rabbis and rich men of Bethshan, simpler and less hurt in worldly ambitions by the revolutionary teaching of Jesus than their brethren of Jerusalem, went silently away,—not, indeed, convinced and converted, but deeply impressed. They came to scoff: they went away to think,—some of them to pray.

When the rich men had gone, the multitude, growing gradually bolder, began to press around; and an old man, leaning upon a staff, who appeared to be a sort of Patriarch among them, pushed to the front and asked Jesus if, indeed, there was to be a new Kingdom set up in Israel. He had heard, he said, that Jesus was teaching that.

“There is,” Jesus answered, “a new Kingdom to be set up in Israel and upon earth; but as John and all the prophets have taught, the new Kingdom must first come in the hearts of men. It is the Kingdom of Kindness and Brotherly Love. The same is the Kingdom of God, and this Kingdom must be *within you*, first. Be good to one another; love your neighbor as yourself. When all men so do then will the King Messiah appear in the clouds, and all the holy angels with him, and then will there be a new Earth.”

* That the doctrine of divorce as set forth in Matthew is a forged addition to the original text has been conclusively proved. Consult “My Religion,” by Tolstoi, Chap. vi; also, “Jesus of Nazara,” by Keim.

"And when," asked the old man, "shall these things be?"

Jesus answered, "The time knoweth no man; no, not the angels in heaven, only the Father."

The old man, and all those of the multitude who were near enough to hear, stared blankly in silence, and the old man went away, muttering his discontent.

Jesus saw that the idea of a temporal Kingdom was the only one that had taken root, and all that he had said about a Spiritual Kingdom was as seed fallen by the wayside. It made him sad, but not discouraged. He thought of the little morsel of leaven that he had seen his mother hide in the mass of meal, and he knew that it would be so with every true word. Mere preaching to the multitude after the manner of John, he had begun to see was of little use. It only made them discontented and restless, stirring in them vain hopes and vague, visionary notions of earthly power and dominion. And so, when they asked him questions, he told them stories.

Jesus had an inexhaustible fund of homely stories that all could appreciate in a degree, and he could make up a story for any occasion. What now grieved and discouraged him most of all was to see that his increasing fame among the people was due almost entirely to the reputation he had got as a worker of miracles. In the noble honesty and purity of his heart, Jesus had naturally shrunk with aversion from acquiring such a fame. Mere miracle workers, already numerous, by their frauds and deceptions had preyed upon the people to their great harm, and to the impoverishment of many. It was reported of one Simon Magus, of Samaria, that he had not only cured all kinds of sickness by his arts, but had raised the dead. Jesus' true and delicate instinct revolted from a notoriety based upon such arts; and in the many instances where his intense sympathy with distress, aided by a powerful dominating personality and magnetic presence, had enabled him

to give relief to suffering, he had straightly charged the person relieved to keep the matter to himself and not publish it.

But spite of his precautions, the story of his wonderful cures had gone abroad; and he saw now in the multitude about him a large number of sufferers who were timidly approaching,—some helped forward by their friends, and all given place with that generous sympathy which everywhere and at all times is characteristic of the poor and the lowly. The utter wretchedness of such beings can be fully realized only by those who have travelled in the Orient, and seen with their own eyes the loathsome, abject misery of the sick among its poor. Hunger-wasted, cadaverous beings, hollow-eyed, with hands like bird's claws, grimy with dirt, and clothed in filthy rags, they pressed around him, believing with the simple faith of children that the Great Master *could* help them,—if he would.

Unlike the Scribes and Pharisees, who spurned them away with scorn and abuse, this new Master, with the presence of a King, looked upon them with tender eyes, kindling with love; he spoke to them words of sympathy and kindness. He had already cured many. Surely he would cure them!

Well may it have been said that Jesus, looking upon this scene not only of the sick, the lame, and the blind, but of the scarcely less pitiable multitude of the ignorant and besotted, all sons of Abraham and children of the promise, was moved with COMPASSION. His heart swelled within him. The "Berserker Rage," which in the old Norse Sea King could wield the sword of a giant and hew down an army, was turned, in Jesus, to the mild power of the sun to *quicken, restore, and build*.

Jesus felt blazing up within him the fervid flame of SYMPATHY and Love, and with it an accession of spiritual power almost limitless. There was in him an exaltation, an elevation of soul, that radiated out from him, luminous

and dazzling, like a great Light. His form dilated, his eyes seemed almost to emit sparks of fire, and his whole being took on an aspect that made men gaze upon him as upon a god. Jesus felt this sudden and mysterious accession of power, and knew that there was virtue given him against all evil; he knew not whence it came, but in the directness and simplicity of his pious soul, whence could it come but from God. All the wisdom of men has not been able to give it a better explanation.

And Jesus went out among the people, the sick, the lame, the blind, putting his hands upon them and speaking blessed words of hope and cheer. He told them here the story of Lazarus and Dives, and of the Prodigal Son. He assured them that God had not forgotten His people, and repeated again and again, with glowing words and manner, what he had told the old man about the Messiah coming in the clouds, with angels and unimaginable glory; and the simple people looked upon him with an awe and reverence hardly to be understood in this unbelieving age. Many to whom he spoke and upon whom he put his hands believed themselves cured of their infirmities, and *were* cured; and all felt themselves stirred and roused into a newness of life. Some displayed the wildest enthusiasm, and went away singing and shouting and praising God.

It was a day of exhausting toil, such as only one gifted to do it can know; and when the evening was come, and the people sent away to their homes, Jesus suddenly became aware that he was utterly wearied and spent. He had eaten nothing since the morning, and in the excitement no one but Mary had thought to provide any thing for the evening meal. She, when Jesus had lain down in his tent, brought a carefully prepared dish of pottage, such as all Hebrews have loved from the days when blind old Isaac received it at the hand of the perfidious Jacob. She placed it before him timidly, without speaking.

Jesus had cast himself upon the rude bed and lay in

careless discomposure, with one hand hanging down to the ground and with his eyes closed. So completely exhausted was he that every function of life was at the lowest ebb: he hardly breathed, and his pulse almost ceased to beat; he really thought himself dying. He seemed asleep; but his lips moving as if in prayer, and eyelids quivering with nervous strain, revealed plainly enough that he was not sleeping. Presently, however, his lips ceased to move, and he opened his eyes, to meet those of Mary fixed upon him with tender solicitude.

"Thou art my angel of Mercy, Mary," he said "God surely hath raised thee up to be His minister. I know not how, but it hath been given me to see that thou, too, hast a work to do in this world, Thou art blessed of my Father."

Mary dropped on her knees, and taking the cold, clammy hand of Jesus, chafed it with her own warm palms, and bathed it with her tears. "The work is too great for thee," she said. "Thou art growing thin and pale every day, and I feel sure thou canst not go on for long this way. Why not take two or three of thy disciples and go away secretly, and rest for awhile."

While they were talking, there was the sound of excited voices outside the tent, that arose almost to the pitch of anger. They could distinguish the voices of the disciples mingled with those of Salome and the other women, arguing and contending about the places they would have in the New Kingdom.

Jesus sat up, and heaved a sigh that was almost a groan. "Will they never learn? Will they never see?" he murmured. "Thou art right, Mary, in a manner, in saying I should go away; but I must go alone. Thou canst tell them not to follow or look for me, for when the spirit moveth I will come again. Call in my disciples."

Mary went to the door of the tent and told them that the Master wished to see them, and immediately they ceased to

contend, and came in timidly, knowing that they had been heard. Jesus then asked them what it was that they were contending so angrily about; all hung their heads, and no one answered. Then Jesus asked: "Where is little Ruth?"

Now Ruth was a little girl whom Joanna, her mother, had brought with her, because she loved her and could not be parted from her; and when Ruth was brought in, she came clinging to her mother and hiding her face in her skirts, because she was afraid. But Jesus called to her, and after some persuasion she went to him very timidly, and Jesus took her upon his knees. Then he spoke to his disciples.

"You are yet contending about place and power in the New Kingdom, but try and remember what I say to you: Unless you are converted, and become changed in heart and become as this little child, there will never be any Kingdom of God for you; for as I told the old man to-day, the Kingdom of God is to come, first, *within you*, in the hearts of men. The old man was offended because of this saying, and so, I fear, will you be; but so must it be, for the fulfilling of all righteousness.

"Ye seek to exercise authority; so do the rulers of the Gentiles seek to exercise authority over them; but in the Kingdom of God, it is not so. Love banisheth fear, and where love is, law and authority, whose instrument fear is, cannot come. Be ye, therefore, as this little child, meek and lowly of heart; for I say unto you that in the New Kingdom he will be most esteemed who serveth best, and he will be greatest who is servant of all. In that New Kingdom, unlike the Rulers of the Gentiles, the greatest shall not be distinguished from the least * by dress or food or equipage or servants or aught that is outside of a man, but only by Service. He who loveth best serveth best, and he who serveth best is Master of all."

* "A practice then firmly established among the Essenes."—Geikie.

While Jesus was speaking, someone came to the tent door and inquired for him. Peter, who went to see, returned answer that it was one of the rich men of Bethshan, who had been with the company from the city that day. Jesus told Peter to admit him, and when he was come in he fell at Jesus' feet, and addressing him as Good Master, told him that what he had seen and heard that day had troubled him so he could not sleep or find rest till he had come and asked Jesus what he should do to be received as a disciple.

Jesus first corrected him about calling him good, for, he said, "There is none really good but God. We all do fail in something, of being wholly righteous; and to become a disciple, thou must first obey the commandments as Moses gave them, 'Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Defraud not. Honor thy father and mother, and love thy neighbor as thyself.'"

And the man said, "All these have I observed from my youth up."

The man was young, and of a noble countenance and bearing; and Jesus, looking upon him, felt his heart yearn towards him, and he loved him. "I would joy to have thee for a disciple," he said, "but one thing thou lackest; go, and sell all that thou hast: give to the poor what is meet, and come and cast in thy lot with us."

Upon hearing this the young man arose, and his countenance was changed, for he was greatly troubled. "I have great possessions," he said, "and must it be that I sell all?"

"Thou must reserve to thyself nothing," Jesus answered. "All these that thou seest, my disciples, have given their all. We have no property but in common. Even if thou obeyest the law, as thou sayest thou hast, to love thy neighbor as thyself, how canst thou retain for thyself what thou givest not to another?"

And the young man went away very sorrowful. And Jesus and all those who stood near were made sad, for the young man was pleasing to look upon, and they desired that he might be one of them. Then there spoke one of the company who lived at Bethshan, and he confirmed that which was already thought, for he said the young man was of a noble family and lived without reproach in every observance of the Law, that he was a good son and a good husband and father, and that even his numerous slaves and the peasantry on his great estates were devoted to him.

Jesus sighed at this recital, and said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

The disciples showed astonishment at such radical doctrine, and one asked, "Who, then, can be saved?"

Jesus answered, "Consider the rich man. If any rich man is to come into the New Kingdom, we would say, surely it should be he. As we learn, he is accounted a model man in the world, faultless and without reproach; I fear that he looks upon himself as well nigh perfect, and that his desire to become one of us arises from a mere thirst for knowledge of new things, to gain something for himself rather than a desire to serve others. He has no idea that he owes anything to those poor bond-servants and half naked wretches who serve him and wear out their lives for him on his estate. He looks upon himself not as a brother man to them, but as one superior and entitled to their service, one to whom God has given rule over them, and who already, by trying a little to protect them against robbers and publicans and Roman exactions, is their benefactor as well as Lord Paramount. No," he repeated, sadly, "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God."

No one spoke after this; and one after another of the

company stole silently away, leaving Jesus alone with Mary. Little Ruth had fallen asleep, with her head on Jesus' breast; and Jesus arose and laid her softly, without waking, on the bed. Mary had lighted a lamp and set it on a table close by, and its light shone on the face of the sleeping child. Jesus gazed upon her innocent beauty with gloating eyes, and at last stooped and kissed her rosy cheek, leaving a tear. He knew that Mary's passionate eyes were fastened upon him and he dared not look up, but took his cloak and without a word went away into the darkness.

That night, when the waning moon rose, a weary, bent man, with a staff, was climbing slowly and painfully the rugged slope of Mount Gilboa, where a thousand years before the fated Saul and his warrior sons went down before the sword of the Philistine.

XXXIX

WEAKNESS

“And Jesus immediately, knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about.”—Mark v-30.

The itinerary of Jesus' journeyings from place to place through Judea, Samaria, and Galilee has, unfortunately, been lost, and is not now recoverable. But we next find him in teeming Galilee, and not far from the Lake of Tiberias. In the meantime the excitement has increased and extended. The stories of miracles and the healing of all manner of diseases, spread by wildly excited enthusiasts, has aroused the people, if possible, more than ever before. It has begun to be whispered that Jesus is the long-looked-for Messiah.

Other complications have arisen. The Zealot emissaries of Jacobus have worked upon the people to induce them to proclaim Jesus King. Not that they really wanted a king, — this least of all, — but because they hoped by this device to gain some support for their cause, and more especially to force Jesus to make a decided stand; it being well known to Jacobus and all the Zealot leaders that Jesus was as unalterably opposed to kingly rule as themselves. Some even of Jesus' chosen disciples, Simon Zelotes, Judas Iscariot, and Peter, have been brought to consider this plan favorably. The Priestly Party has also given encouragement to this movement as most surely to arouse Pilate to energetic opposition, and to bring the power of Rome to destroy Jesus and his heresy. The case for the Priestly Party is becoming really desperate. All sects and septs are uniting against the tyranny and injustice of priestly rule, and neither Herod nor the Romans will raise a hand to put down its enemies. The plot thickens on every hand.

Annas and Caiaphas have succeeded in so working upon the fears of the luxurious and slothful Rabbis at Jerusalem that they have been aroused to more activity, and the most able and adroit of their number have gone personally into Galilee to use whatever means may offer to oppose the flood of innovation which threatens to sweep away all the artfully constructed cobwebbery of their Priestly rule.

Under conditions like these we get our next view of Jesus at Dalmanutha, not far from Magdala. Yesterday was one of the greatest days so far in Jesus' career. In the midst of wild excitement occasioned by the cure of a paralytic, a cry was raised, proclaiming Jesus King. There are various and strangely conflicting accounts of where and by whom the cry was first raised; but there can be no doubt but that it was instigated and urged forward by the agents of both Jacobus and Annas.

An unknown man of good presence and pleasing address had harangued the multitude, and urged upon them many plausible reasons for making Jesus King. In the confusion which followed the man disappeared, and no one could tell whence he came or whither he went. At night, when all was over, all sorts of stories were in circulation about this mysterious stranger. Some said he was a prophet, a holy man sent of God, and some even said that he had vanished out of sight like an apparition.

Among those who urged Jesus to become King were his disciples Simon Zelotes, Judas Iscariot, and Peter. Of course Jesus had refused to listen to such a proposal, and finally, to escape solicitation, withdrew to his tent and refused to be seen any more that day. The multitude attending upon him was greater than ever before, and the people had begun to lose their awe of him to that extent that they pressed upon him with clamor. One-half of the male population of these parts, because of ignorance and vile, filthy habits, were suffering from some kind of disease of the eyes, and the paralytic and insane were very

numerous. All these pressed upon Jesus with cries, the hoarse voices of men mingling with the shrill screams of wretched women, all miserable creatures,—homeless, friendless, and despairing, cast out to die, as they often were, by relatives scarcely less poor and miserable than themselves. Those that could walk sought but to touch the hem of Jesus' garment, and at one time, the cry being raised that Jesus was in the act of healing all who came, there was such a wild rush to get near that many poor, helpless wretches were trod under foot and killed.

Jesus' sympathies were aroused by these spectacles to a painful degree. As at Bethshan, he had great compassion; but what could he do in such a deluge. To his chosen disciples, alone by themselves, he could speak of the law of love, teach them to despise riches and glory in poverty, planting in them the seed of Universal Brotherhood. But even in them he had found thus far little evidence of intelligent appreciation. What, then, could there possibly be in this besotted crowd to encourage him!

That night, as Jesus lay in his tent thinking of all these things, the hopelessness of the situation came upon him with almost crushing weight. He was depressed and cast down by extreme exhaustion, too weak and nerveless even to sleep. Virtue had gone out of him almost to the last drop. As he reviewed the work of the past, beginning with John and his head brought in on a charger for the amusement of harlots and drunken roisterers, and thought how little had been gained and how he himself might share the fate of John, he grew sick at heart.

And now this perverting demand for him to be King, with all it entailed of ruthless war and bloodshed,—and this the apparent fruit of all his own work and teaching, and his chosen disciples supporting and urging it on. How far off, how impossible, seemed now his ecstatic dream of a Kingdom of God.

Jesus knew that the following day would be, if possible,

more laborious and trying,—greater in its demand for calmness and strength and decision than any former day. He knew, or at least divined, of all the plots against him, and in his present state of exhaustion felt that it would be impossible for him to meet all the demands of the hour in a way to honor his cause. His impassioned soul was subject, even more than other men's, to those extremes of elation and depression which the noblest minds have most markedly exhibited. If, in the strength of the morning, he could look upon the New Kingdom as at hand, at the very door,—in the weakness and exhaustion of the midnight hour, it often seemed too far away to be ever reached or realized.

And hence it was that so often after such days of labor and excitement Jesus withdrew himself secretly in the night, and went away into mountains and deserts, where, in solitary communion with God, he could alone find strength and courage for renewed battle. This was one of those occasions.

The question of how to meet on the morrow renewed attempts to bring him into collision with Rome: whether he should have wisdom and strength to answer the cunning queries of the learned and practiced Rabbis from Jerusalem, whom he knew were laying snares for him! *Could* he gather energy and faith sufficient to meet that army of sick and miserable outcasts whom he knew were in waiting for him?

Thinking of these things, Jesus' head reeled, a faintness came over him almost like death. So it would be on the morrow. His enemies would laugh him to scorn; they would triumph over him, and his cause would suffer defeat. Jesus arose. Better, far better, were it to flee than to remain. A small lamp, lighted and left by Mary, burned low on a stand near by, and by its dim light Jesus saw his cloak, cleaned and dusted by the same hand, lying near it.

Yes, he would go away alone to the desert or the mountains and rest for a time. He took up his cloak, extinguished the light, and went out.

It was midnight, and his immediate followers were all asleep. There was no moon, but the great constellations were forth, Sirius and Aldebaran through that still, clear air blazing like suns. Jesus stood for some time looking upward, and his lips moved in silent prayer. He knew nothing of astronomy, but to him, as to every reverent soul since the world began, those silent monitors spoke of infinite power and infinite goodness, and he repeated with reverence Job's noble invocation: "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens and treadest upon the waves of the sea, which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south."

Late as it was, as Jesus walked on he passed numerous groups of people still sitting about little smouldering fires and talking excitedly about him and his doings. He did not pause to listen, for such things were only a spur to urge him swifter away.

At last he had got clear of the camp, and was in an open field, hurrying on towards a wild, rocky gorge that was well known to him, when, from a thicket of myrtle he was passing, he heard a sound that startled him and made him pause. As he listened intently, he heard a voice in prayer. The air was so still and the silence so profound, and the voice, though low, rang out so clear in the quiet midnight, he could not choose but hear. It was a woman's voice praying, *and for him*: that he might be saved from his enemies, that he might have strength and courage to do battle manfully, and to overcome, to do the work appointed him. What thoughts he had it were presumption to surmise! For the moment he was overwhelmed. A large evergreen oak stood near, and Jesus, trembling violently, passed beneath it and sat down.

A little later the praying ceased, and a woman came out of the thicket and stood a moment with upturned face, silent and motionless. The old moon was just rising, and by its light and the stars shining full upon it, Jesus saw the rapt, wistful, and still beautiful face of Mary of Magdala.

XL

EXHAUSTION

"To the Pharisees Jesus would seem to have been defeated, and to stand self-convicted of having made Divine claims which, when challenged, He could not substantiate."—Edersheim.

Mary went back to camp entirely unconscious of having been heard or observed. When Jesus lost sight of her, passing behind a cactus hedge, he slipped off the stone on which he sat, and threw himself upon his face on the bare ground, and there he lay for a long time as one dead.

At last a flush of dawn began to glow in the east, the moon and stars grew pale, and a lark, springing from its nest near by, soared heavenward, filling all the air with its wondrous song. Then Jesus got up, and after repeating the Shema started back to his place.

It was a beautiful morning, and the scene spread out before Jesus was then, and is even yet, after nineteen centuries of misrule, of war, and devastation, one of the most beautiful in the world. Away to the eastward, sparkling and glowing under the morning sun, lay in full view the fair lake of Galilee, dotted with sails, and its shores lined with cities and villages bowered in tropical verdure. The rising mists of morning, rolling and curling in a thousand grotesque forms, and gilded here and there with solar fire, half hid the purple mountains of the farther side, while at his feet and all around lay as fair a scene of farms and vineyards, orchards and groves, as ever graced the world. There was the accumulated wealth of a thousand years of patient toil. The magnificence of the cities and of the palaces of the rich was beyond compare. The earth brought forth abundantly; there was enough, and to spare.

Jesus looked upon all this as he walked in from the fields,

and his heart swelled with love and joy and gratitude to God for giving to man so beautiful and so good a world. Then suddenly in thought he was again among the crowd, and again he saw its poverty, its filth, its disease and misery and degradation. Again he looked upon the bent forms, the pinched, haggard faces of the half-naked wretches who had come swarming from their mud-hovels, looking to him for rescue and *for vengeance*. Again he was thrown into the wavering balance, and heart and mind were torn with new conflicts. Might not Jacobus and brother Jude, after all, be in the right? How could this greatest of all wrongs, built in, woven as the very warp into, the constitution of all human things, be done away without blood?

Thinking of these things, Jesus went aside into a thicket of shrubs and wild vines, and sat down. For a long time he sat there, thinking, thinking, thinking, forgetful of where he was and what he was doing; but finding no certainty, no peace. The world, the meaning of man, and his destiny! Whence, and whither? Was it, then, but a tangled web that he could not unravel?

After a time Jesus became aware of sounds and movement near at hand; then, as he listened, he could hear the music of tambourines, and sweet, clear voices, singing, and shouts of laughter. Putting aside the branches, Jesus looked out upon a little smooth, grassy plot near a small stream of clear water, where a company of young girls were having a gay frolic with song and music and dance. There were no men or boys present, and the girls were giving loose rein to the natural and innocent joy of living. They were all children of the poor,—dirty, unkempt, and clothed in scanty rags: but they were happy; they had health, simplicity and purity, and these were enough.

Jesus gazed long upon this scene, and when he at last arose and went towards the camp, his form was again erect, his eye clear and steadfast, and his heart-beats slow and full. For the moment he was himself again. The work of serv-

ing Jesus in the various offices of a domestic had, by this time, naturally fallen to Mary of Magdala. There had been nothing said to influence such a disposition; but Mary had shown an eagerness to serve, and her ministrations had evidently been acceptable. The other women, with equal zeal, still thought it not unfitting that the fallen sister should perform the more menial services. They allowed her to gather sticks for the fire, and to prepare the breakfast for Jesus and for them.

When Mary brought in the few simple things for Jesus' morning meal, she also set before him a cup of wine. "This," she said, "is something rare and fine; Joanna got it through her husband from the stores of Herod. It will be better for you than the common sour stuff we have had. I pray you drink of it. You will need all your strength this day."

Jesus pushed the wine away, saying, "No, Mary. I cannot drink wine,—perhaps never again,—it goes to my head, and instead of giving me strength, seems only to confuse and darken my mind. Joanna is very kind, as you all are, but please don't bring me wine any more."

The anxious care of Mary noted that not only was the wine refused, but that Jesus ate almost nothing of the more substantial fare. She saw, too, that beneath an exterior of calmness, there was real exhaustion and weakness. She did not know that he had not slept, but she divined it.

"Surely thou canst not go out to-day," she said. "The work is too heavy for thee. Let me call Peter, and have him send the people away till thou art rested and more able to meet them." The woman was very earnest and there were tears in her eyes. But Jesus looked at her sadly, and shook his head.

"O my Lord and Master!" cried Mary, casting herself at Jesus' feet. "Let my words prevail this once! Do let Peter send the people away." Jesus only put his hand on the bowed head, and closed his eyes without answering.

"And Ehud has told me this morning that more Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem, are to come upon thee to-day. Thou art sick, and not prepared to meet them. Oh, let Peter *say* that thou art sick."

"It is not true that I am sick, and Peter must not say it," said Jesus, firmly. "Perhaps to-morrow I will go away, but to-day it is too late. Let it be as God wills. If I am to meet the Scribes and Pharisees this day, God will give me strength."

And so Jesus went forth and sat down in front of his tent and talked. He did not go about among the crowd, but sat and taught. After a time he was asked by one, saying, "Master: It is said by the Rabbis that when the Messiah is come the earth will produce of itself and without labor a hundredfold what now it does, that the stalks of corn will grow like palm trees, that a single grape will load a wagon and pure wine of Engedi will flow from it as from a cask. In the New Kingdom that thou dost promise, will it be so? And will there be in it no more taskmasters, no more hunger, or thirst, or cold, or nakedness?"

And Jesus answered and said what he often repeated, "The Kingdom of God is within *you*. It is what *you* make it. You may make it as you say, free from every evil."

Then he told them a story. "Once on a time," he said, "there was a great king, who ruled over many nations. He had palaces and gardens, slaves and servants without number. He had wives and concubines, the fairest in all the world. There was nothing that heart could wish that was not his. Even the labor and care of administering his great kingdom and taking care of his great possessions were laid upon others. And yet this great king was not happy,—his palaces and parks and gardens, with their brave ornaments, their fountains and fruits and flowers, were no better to him than the wilderness. The sun, the

moon, the stars, and the blue heaven above were as the dull shows of a theater or a stage. His wives and his concubines were hateful to his eyes. He found no delight in any thing that there was in all the world, and the king's countenance was fallen, and he became a fear unto all that came near unto him.

"Then, at last, the king called together all the magicians and all the astrologers and all the soothsayers of his kingdom, to inquire of them how he should find happiness. And some said one thing, and some another; and the king tried many devices but was not healed. At length came a wise man from the desert, who said to the king, 'If thou gettest thee the chaluq (shirt) of a happy man and wearest it, thou wilt be happy!' So spake the holy man from the desert, and departed.

"Then thought the king, how easy and simple a thing in this; surely my chief counselor is a happy man, and I will wear his shirt and be happy. But when the chief counselor was asked, he declared unto the king that he of all men, because of the cares and burdens of government, was least happy. And so was it with all the princes and governors and captains who ruled over the provinces and cities and over the armies of the king. One and all, some for one thing and some for another, counted themselves unhappy. Then the king sought among merchants and traffickers, tradesmen and husbandmen, but found no one. All were equally lacking.

"At last, in despair, as he was one day passing along a country road, he saw a beggar-man sitting by the wayside, playing on a harp and singing a simple song. The beggar-man gave no heed to the king with all his splendor of equipage and attendance, but went on singing and playing; and he looked so serene and contented that the king commanded that he be brought to him that he might inquire of him. And the beggar-man confessed, and told the king that he was happy. Then was the king glad, and gave

command that the shirt of the beggar-man be taken from him,—when lo! it was found that the beggar-man had no shirt. And the king's trouble remained without remedy.”

This story was listened to with breathless attention by the multitude, but when it was finished Jesus saw by the blank faces and the glance from one to another that there was no true understanding of the lesson taught. One sturdy yeoman he heard saying, “And must we all be beggars to be happy?”

Then Jesus began again, and said, “Who hath ears to hear, let him hear: the Kingdom of God cometh to every man who is able to receive it. The Father of us all sendeth his rain upon the just and on the unjust, upon the evil and the good. The earth brings forth. The grass grows in the field. The corn grows while the sluggard sleeps. The vine and the olive cover the hills. There is enough and to spare. And the sun shines, the moon gives her light, the stars come forth, the winds speak their testimonies, the lilies bloom, the birds sing, the mountain is lifted up, the seas and the plain are spread out alike for all God's children. No man can be deprived. They are as free to the beggar by the wayside as to the king on his throne.

“The happiness that comes of being kind, of loving and being loved, of being good,—what man can be deprived of this, the greatest of blessings? And God, our Father, so made it from the beginning, that His best gifts to His children may not be taken away from any man who will receive them. They may not be bought, or sold, or stolen. They are the unalienable inheritance of God's children *forever*.”

In the afternoon, while Jesus was telling a story to the crowd about him, it was suddenly announced that the company of Rabbis from Jerusalem were at hand, and desired to see Jesus. The crowd respectfully gave place to them, and they came up close to where Jesus was, and with stately ceremonies made their obeisance to him. Five of these

Rabbis are the Sanhedrists we have already met in secret conclave with Annas at Jerusalem. They are Judas, Levi, Jairus, Alexander, and Naphtali. With them is our old acquaintance Boethus, and also Nicodemus. Nicodemus has not come as a member of the commission, but independently, with his daughter Rachel.

Meeting him here as a member of the Sanhedrin was rather embarrassing to these secret agents of Annas, but they put on a bold face and invited Nicodemus and his daughter to go with them to meet Jesus. They explained that curiosity had drawn them to make the journey, as no doubt was the case with Nicodemus, they said. Nicodemus was not deceived, but he thought best to dissemble; and with Rachel he joined the party, and went with them to see Jesus, who received them with calm serenity and — to the astonishment and even the horror of many of his followers — with no more ceremony than if they were farmers or mechanics. Jesus asked them to be seated, and then went on with his discourse, just as if no one but common people were there.

At last, when Jesus came to a pause, Alexander, the lawyer, arose and said, "Good Master! You will pardon us of Jerusalem, who know of you and of your works only by report, if we do not understand all we have heard of your teaching and have some questions to ask. Now it is said that thou sayest of *thyself* that thou art a holy man, a man sent of God; some even say that thou hast set up to be the *Son* of God. What sayest thou of these things?"

Jesus answered, mildly, "Every man that cometh into the world is a child of God. If he does God's work and continues therein, he is a Son and *Heir*. To work with, and for the Father is to be His Son, and Heir to the Universe. All are Sons who do God's work, for He has no bond-servants."

Alexander answered by saying, "It ill becomes us to call in question so wise a Rabbi as thou art on matters of

this sort. But how are we to know, now and here, that thou art sent of God? It is reported of thee that thou hast performed many miracles, healed the sick, restored the blind, and cast out Devils. Show us now and here that thou hast the power of a prophet, and we will believe thee to be one. Give us a sign of thy authority."

The coming of these Rabbis from Jerusalem had been an event much talked of among Jesus' followers, and speculation had been rife as to what would be the outcome. It was generally believed that Jesus would make the occasion one as memorable as that of Moses before Pharaoh, of Daniel before Nebuchadnezzar, or of Elijah before Ahab. And when it was known that the Rabbis had come, the whole multitude from near and far pressed and crowded around, that they might be actual witnesses of the direful discomfiture of Jesus' enemies. When they heard this bold challenge of Alexander's their hearts almost ceased to beat. They fully expected to see the ground open and swallow up the unbelievers or a bolt from heaven consume them. But when nothing of the kind occurred and, instead, they saw Jesus' pale and agonized face and trembling lip, the sign of weakness and retreat, and in the Rabbis, evidences of exultation, they were filled with amazement and dismay. And the worst was yet to come.

Jesus saw that he was ensnared, and in striving to extricate himself he became only the more deeply enmeshed. At first he answered nothing, and remained silent. What indeed could he say! The legend of his miracles had grown up about him in that time and in that atmosphere as naturally and inevitably as the toadstool springs from fermenting waste. He could not have prevented it if he would; and he was conscious of possessing extraordinary powers which he well enough and rightly believed to be the gift of God. Like every other human creature this world has yet known, he had begun to accept the popular estimation: he had begun to believe that he *was* in truth what the

people said he was, a prophet; and in his moments of exaltation he felt himself equal to any requirement.

But this divine afflatus, this ethereal spirit, is not to be constrained,—an unseen, winged messenger, it comes, it goes obedient only to the Will of God. Jesus knew this also, and hence his silence. Alexander saw his advantage, and followed it up.

“There hath been,” he said, “no prophet or man of God but hath given a sign, and *many* signs. Moses at the challenge of a stiff-necked and rebellious people smote the barren rock and waters gushed forth. At the word of Elias, the fire even came down from heaven and consumed the two captains with their fifties, and at another time, the sacrifice upon the altar, and the altar itself. Even our Rabbis of deepest learning and repute are not lacking in signs. Every man knows how at the bidding of the Rabbi Eliezer the tree was moved four hundred cubits, the waters flowed backwards, and the walls of stone bowed down and returned to their place. Another Rabbi turned water into blood; and a voice from Heaven has answered to the call of a Rabbi. These things are well known and were done in the open, before all men. Give us now a like sign, and we also will be thy disciples.”

These instances of miracles and signs, with many others not mentioned by Alexander, were well known to all Jews, and their truth was not questioned. It was an established axiom, not only in the Jewish religion but in all the religions of the East, that prophets and men of God could work miracles, and that the power to do so was the test of their calling. Without the miracle there was no prophet. Jesus knew all this, and he saw at once the disastrous consequences of his failure to give a sign.

In his weak and exhausted condition he could not even make a formidable retreat; he lost his habitual calmness and serenity; he became confused and discomposed. He tried to answer at last, but his words were vague and

unintelligible. He said that it was only a wicked and adulterous generation that demanded a sign, and no sign should be given but the sign of the prophet Jonas. Then he made some obscure allusions to the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon, and intimated that he there in their midst was greater than Jonas or Solomon. Then he went on to tell of a devil going in and out of a man, as if he were a house,—first alone, and then with seven companions worse than himself.

To the learned theologian and commentator of to-day, these obscure passages seem not to present insuperable difficulties, and they are explained, doubtless, to the satisfaction of many; but to the unilluminated and uninstructed minds of his hearers, Jesus' meaning was not plain, and the effect, together with his too evident nervousness and exhaustion, was very damaging. To the great company of new disciples or adherents present, it was disastrous, even fatal; they looked from one to another in evident dismay. In this first encounter with their ancient and time-honored Masters, their new and upstart hero and champion was utterly overthrown and cast down. Instantly they began to murmur against him and to draw away. In the crowd were all of Jesus' near relatives,—his mother and sisters and brethren. They, still doubting, had come with some faint hopes that they might see in the loved son and brother that evidence of power and greatness which strangers had ascribed to him. But when they saw and heard what we have described, they felt confirmed in the belief they had long secretly entertained, that Jesus was insane or possessed.

With a view to rescuing him from further embarrassments and to get him away home, where they could care for him, they sent word by those standing near that they wished to speak with him. By this time Jesus saw plainly that he had lost the People. They were slipping away like snow in a great thaw. Alexander and his compeers

could hardly repress their exultation: their faces expressed triumph. Only the chosen twelve, and the few women, remained firm, and among *them* were faces dark and gloomy with disappointment and doubt.

Jesus took it all in at a glance; he knew the attitude of his own family towards him, and he divined with entire certainty what they wanted. Turning then to the little group at his side and stretching out a hand towards them, he cried with passionate fervor, "Behold my mother, my sisters, and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

The ruler of a near-by synagogue, who had come with the Rabbis, explained to them how Jesus' mother and brethren regarded him, and they felt more than ever sure of complete victory. They could now throw off the mask and give the fatal stab. Assuming the air of outraged justice, Alexander cried out and said to Jesus, "Hear now, thou false deceiver, what I say unto thee. We have proven thee now what thou art, a servant of the Devil. Thine own mother and brethren declare that thou art possessed. Behold the soldiers of Herod are already on the road to take thee, and thou wilt have shorter shrift than John. Go, get thee gone, and let Israel see thee no more."

Outraged, hurt, defeated as Jesus was, he still made a defiant answer to the Rabbis as they went exulting away; but when they were gone, and the multitude now following *them* were no longer about him, Jesus withdrew into his tent and threw himself on his face on the ground. Here he lay without sound or motion till after the sun was set, and Mary came in with his supper and lighted a lamp; then Jesus got up, and his eyes sought those of Mary with a dull, hopeless glance. She, too, is like the rest, he thought. But when her eyes met his with the same simple, childlike love and reverence, and she fell at his feet, speaking words of hope and cheer, he felt his own heart bound and his pulses beat with renewed hope and a courage born

almost of despair. If there was *one* who still believed in him, one who loved him, it was enough: he would fight on.

Then he inquired of Mary about the disciples and about the other women. Mary evaded and excused, but was at last obliged to tell that they had all gone after the Rabbis and had listened to their harangues to the multitude against Jesus. None of them came near, but held aloof, and around a little fire away to one side were darkly discussing the gloomy outlook.

Meanwhile Nicodemus and his daughter Rachel had gone away to their tent, and were talking of the events of the day. Both Nicodemus and Rachel had been impressed, not so much by what Jesus had said or done as by his appearance and manner. They understood the trick used by the Rabbis, and saw the disadvantage in which Jesus had been placed. Rachel especially was deeply moved, and yielding as much to her urgings as to his own desire, Nicodemus, after nightfall, sought the tent of Jesus and was admitted to his presence. Nicodemus was the first and only man of culture and influence Jesus had met as a friend. He was the first and only man whose liberal ideas enabled him to appreciate or understand the sublime idealism of the Master.

Men whom Nature has made kin require no introduction, no lengthened intercourse to become acquainted: Jesus and Nicodemus knew each other almost at sight, and engaged at once in a heart-to-heart talk. Jesus went briefly over the movement, beginning with John, and told how he had been led along step by step, till now it seemed to him that his mission was not to Israel alone but to the whole world. He told how and why he believed that a total revolution and upheaval in human affairs was about to take place; he showed the necessity for it; he presented the miseries of the common people — the injustice, extortion, and wrong which were practiced upon them by lawyers, doctors, priests, and the rich generally; he showed the inherent, radical wrongs

of the whole system of government, the wrong and foolishness of all war and violence; how that, as at the beginning, God made everything to produce after its kind, so wars and hatreds and strifes were sure to reproduce and multiply themselves, as would also kindness and brotherly love.

That the Messiah would be God's instrument to effect this great change Jesus believed and affirmed. He did not assume to be the Messiah himself: he had not yet arrived at that point. Jesus did not forget that he was a Jew, or that Nicodemus was a Jew. He sustained and proved all that he said by quoting a great many passages of Scripture which Nicodemus, unlike those with whom Jesus was, being learned in the Law, could understand.

With a sympathetic and appreciative listener, that fiery enthusiasm which was the basis of Jesus' character blazed up, and he became eloquent. Nicodemus listened to him in amazement. For the moment he forgot that he was himself one of the class whom Jesus denounced, a Pharisee, a rich man, and a Sanhedrist. As a Jew he could not but admit the cogency of Jesus' reasoning about the Messiah, and as a philosopher he now saw clearly what probably he had long dimly perceived, that upon the one great question of *man's* relations to man Jesus was inherently right. Indeed, from the standpoint of an orthodox Jew, capable of being honest with himself, simple and sincere, the so-called Idealism of Jesus became a system of irrefragable, iron-bound Logic. Nicodemus saw this, and was convinced by it. Jesus was a Philosopher, reasoning upon a basis of Prophecy. His dreams, if dreams they were, were the realization of the Prophet's rapture.

It was nearly morning when Nicodemus went away. The habitual cautiousness of his race and his station restrained him from too ardent protestation, but he felt in his heart that he was about ready to become a Disciple. But when he had slept, and met Rachel next day at dinner,

he answered to her eager questionings that Jesus was indeed "sublime," but alas! "impracticable." Jesus understood Nicodemus perfectly. He had seen the world enough to know that no man of wealth and station could be expected to conform to the requirement and forsake all for the Cause,—at least not yet. He would cast in the seed faithfully, boldly, continuously, and in every place, trusting absolutely that somewhere in God's earth it would find a nidus for itself and bring forth and multiply.

XLI

DEFECTION

“Nay, might it not even seem from the defection of Judas as if dissatisfaction and disbelief had begun to spread in the innermost circle of Christ’s disciples?”—Edersheim.

The day following the events last recorded was another of strain and trial which Jesus was poorly prepared to meet. Nights without sleep, labors manifold, and dangers threatening, gave him a look so haggard and care-worn that poor Mary, when she brought him his breakfast, could hardly repress her tears; but she tried to look cheerful and smiled and spoke encouragingly of Nicodemus’ visit and what it might lead to. While she was speaking the twelve disciples and the women came into the tent. They entered rather unceremoniously and with loud talk; but when they looked upon Jesus’ haggard face and met his yet calm and quiet eye, they were abashed, and gladly would have gone out again. But Jesus detained them, and kindly inquired how matters stood.

Peter, more bold than the rest, first began by telling how all the new converts had fallen away and gone home, and the people remaining were only beggars and riff-raff who stayed out of curiosity or with the expectation of being fed. Peter’s example made the others bolder, and one after another, and at last almost clamorously, they all added instances to the gloomy details. All united in declaring that, now they no longer feared the People, Herod’s soldiers were certain to pounce upon them, and they would all share the fate of John. Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot grew loud in denouncing Jesus’ refusal to become king when the crown was offered him. The people would have risen, they said, as one man to support him *then*, while

now they must all flee for their lives. The refusal to give a sign to the Rabbis from Jerusalem no one dared to speak about openly, but it was in every one's thoughts, and was obscurely hinted at by several.

Jesus allowed them to go on without making any answer. He only sat still and looked at them: but there was a rebuke in his quiet, sad, steadfast gaze which was more powerful than words, and they all began to be ashamed and at last became silent. Then Jesus spoke: "You say that all the disciples and the people have deserted us, and that Herod has sent soldiers to take us: why do not ye also go away? I would have no man abide with me against his will."

Then the impetuous Peter, casting himself at Jesus' feet, cried out, expressing shame and remorse. "And where, indeed, can we go!" he said. "We cannot go over to the Scribes and Pharisees, and if we did, they would not receive us. Many of us were the disciples of John, and now of thee. We are too well known to escape, and I, for one, have no desire to leave thee. Thou art my Lord and Master. I will not leave thee nor forsake thee, though thou be cast into prison."

These generous words of Peter were as balm to the sore heart of Jesus, and he never forgot them. He remembered, too, that it was the example of Peter, more than aught else, that held the other eleven to their allegiance. First John and then James followed Peter in declaring their loyalty, and they were followed shamefacedly by the other nine. The women also, who had stood modestly in the background, came forward with protestations and tears, Mary of Magdala alone remaining silent.

After some further questioning and consultation, Jesus made known his decision to flee from Herod and get out of his dominions as soon as possible. To this there were some strong expressions of dissent. Peter and several of the others had wives and children who were in a destitute

condition, and they were very loath to become exiles; and besides, what could they do in a foreign land to gain a subsistence? Numbers of them were fishermen who knew no other business.

Then Judas gave what seemed the final quietus to this scheme by stating that his bag, the treasury of the Brotherhood, was empty. He went on to state that with all the multitude of new disciples that had lately joined them, the treasury had gained nothing. "For," he said grumbly, "they were a lot of ragamuffins who hardly had a shirt to their backs, and to whom we have had to give the bread they ate. I spent our last penny to buy bread for them yesterday; and now where are they? Those that remain are only hanging around for more bread."

It was a sore strait; and to Judas, upon whom the whole burden of their worldly affairs rested, who provided and dispensed, made bargains and paid bills, the whole affair began to appear not only hopeless but almost contemptible.

"I don't want to say a word," he said, "to discourage any brother or sister, but it does seem to me that the object aimed at and the means used in our case are ludicrously out of proportion. We talk big about setting up a New Kingdom in the world, more magnificent and glorious than any before known; and yet here we are, preparing to flee the country and without money enough to buy a loaf of bread."

Judas and Simon Zelotes had talked this matter up among the disciples the night before, and unless Jesus could be induced to set up for a King, and so gain the active support of the Zealots and the people generally, they favored disbanding entirely. "What use," they said, "to waste ourselves following a Leader who will not lead, who wouldn't even resist a robber or return a blow?" But here again, as in many another giddy fight, and forlorn hope in world history: where the strong men have palled, gone backwards, and given up, the poor, weak women have

seized the falling banner and borne it forward to victory.

All the women present except Mary of Magdala, tore off their ornaments and circlets of coins and threw them at Judas' feet, and Joanna and Susanna declared that means should not be lacking. Their husbands were known to be rich, and their declarations were received with credit.

And so it was determined to give up the cause in Galilee and Judea for the present, and get out of the dominions of Herod as a necessary provision of safety.

XLII

IN FLIGHT

"This fleeing also exhibits that genuinely human character, which consists not only in dread of death like the rest of us, but also prudence, discretion, bravery, both in attack and defense."—Keim.

It being decided that they must leave their own country for a time, the question at once arose, whither, and by what means. Peter and some of the bolder ones, as Judas and Simon Zelotes, with the notion still of raising an army, strongly favored going by way of Damascus to the dispersed among the Gentiles, to Babylonia and the East. None of them, not even Jesus, had any but the vaguest notions of conditions in those heathen lands. They only knew that great numbers of Jews came annually from those countries to the Great Feasts at Jerusalem, and Simon Zelotes declared that they were all Zealots at heart, looking and praying for the time to come when they could return in triumph to the land of their fathers. Jesus listened absently to these arguments, but gave no decision. "We will cross the lake," he said, "into the dominions of Philip, and there have time to consider."

With their scant supply of money they could hardly afford to hire boats at Magdala or Terichea to take them across, and so decided to go to the home of Peter and James and John, and try to get boats of Zebedee or Jonas. The humiliation of such a proceeding was extreme, but there appeared no other way. And so the little company, consisting of Jesus and the twelve only, with the women, proceeded with what speed they could on foot to Bethsaida.

The news of their defeat and humiliation by the Jerusalem Rabbis had preceded them, and they got a very sour

reception from Zebedee and Jonas; even Salome, discouraged and worn as she was, and overawed by Zebedee's stern and reproachful eye, appeared ashamed and was silent. Jesus himself did not appear at all among his old-time friends while the disciples were seeking for means of passage, but wandered off along the lake shore, solitary, musing, buried in his own thoughts. Zebedee and Jonas were together overhauling their nets when their sons came. They had been talking over the situation, and were ready for a pretty strong expression of their views.

"We think it is time you fellows gave up this wild-geese chase and came back to work," Zebedee said. "It really looks as though you were all crazy, possessed of the Devil. Why, just look at it! You have sold and spent all you had, and to-day you haven't a penny in your pocket nor a friend in the world, and are flying for your lives for fear Herod will get you. I'll wager you haven't money enough in your whole company to hire a boat to cross the lake, and that's why you came to us. But you can't have any of *our* boats—set that down! We've made up our minds not to do any more for you fellows till you have got all done with this folly and are ready to settle down to business."

While Zebedee was speaking, Peter's wife came, leading two little children by the hand, and they all cast themselves at Peter's feet and besought him to come home to them. Peter and all present were deeply moved. Perhaps Jesus himself, if he could see and know, might be induced to give up. After some consultation it was decided that Peter and James and John should go and talk with Jesus about it.

When they came near where Jesus was, they saw him sitting on the shore, looking out over the waters of the lake and so absorbed in thought that he did not notice their near approach. After lingering, doubtful and troubled for some time, they went back without speaking

to Jesus: they could not meet his eye with such a message.

Peter took his wife aside and besought her to have patience and wait a little longer, for, as he told her, he still felt sure that the New Kingdom was at hand, when they would be repaid a thousandfold for all their dreary waiting.

Then they went and took an old, abandoned boat that belonged to Philip, and with much labor and skill fixed it up so they dared to use it. It was anything but a joyful company that took ship that day from Bethsaida for the other side. No one bade them good-bye or God speed; but Peter's wife and children, with Jesus' mother and Doris, Mary of Magdala, and the wife of Philip, who had also come, stood far off weeping. Jesus saw it all, and his set face took on a sternness of aspect that filled the disciples with a vague awe and hushed them into silence. If they spoke to one another it was in low tones.

It was nearly night when the company at last embarked, going out into the night towards strange lands and so poorly provided for. As they pushed out, the sun was setting like a ball of fire behind the Galilean hills; its red light reflected from the bare rock walls of the farther side made the lake red like blood. Far to the north, old Hermon's everlasting snows glowed crimson, and all the air was tinged incarnadine. While the disciples rowed, Jesus stood in the stern of the boat, gazing intently upon the receding shores. There behind them lay spread out the scene of all his joys and sorrows, his labors and trials. All the cities and villages that lined the lake shore from Tiberias to Capernaum were in view,—the marble palaces of priestly Sadducees beside the fishermen's squalid huts, stately synagogues and heathen temples amid palm and orange trees and olive groves, and far above and beyond, now clothed in shadow, his native hills of Cana and of Nazareth. It was the land of his birth, the land that he

loved: it contained all that thus far he had wrought and struggled for.

But Galilee had rejected him! Galilee had thrust him out into exile! Not even the mother or sister, whom he loved, could see in him aught better than a renegade or a lunatic; and the disciples, who were laboring unwillingly at the oars, were grumbling, and some even swearing, in sullen discontent.

It was a bitter hour. Jesus stood long watching the receding shores grow dim, till the rosy hue of sea and sky had changed to blackness, and the stars came out. Then he turned and sat down and began to speak. His voice was so deep and sad, so thrilling with subdued emotion, that the rowers held their oars suspended and listened, while the boat drifted with the gentle wind.

“The love of home and kindred,” he said, “is good and beautiful. It is in the ground-plan of the world. The good time predicted by the prophets of old was when every man should sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, with his family about him and none to make him afraid. And this is in part, the Kingdom of God for which *we* strive,—but not for ourselves. Until the Kingdom of God shall indeed come, there must ever be those who labor and strive and suffer that others may enter into their labors.

“It has ever been so, from Moses and the prophets to the present hour. We thought we had done much when we gave up all our goods and possessions; but now we know that was but a little. The thing itself for which we strive we must give up for ourselves, that others may enjoy. We go forth sowing the seed weeping, that others may reap rejoicing. We have put our hand to the plow: we must not look back. Remember Lot’s wife. No man is worthy in this cause who cannot give all, not only houses and lands, wife and children and father and mother, but his own life also. Yea,” he added, almost bitterly, “if a man

hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters and his own life also, he cannot be as I am: he cannot be my disciple."

For a time Jesus remained silent, looking towards the sky, where, through the pure, clear air, the constellations blazed with a splendor unknown to western lands. By their light shining on his upturned face, the disciples could see its expression; and John, by a motion, called Peter's attention, and they both saw what seemed to them a heavenly brightness about his head.

At length Jesus began again, but in a manner so absorbed and rapt that the disciples were awed and in fear. "And I see the new Jerusalem come down from Heaven, and the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of Power, and the holy Angels with Him; and there is judgment and fiery indignation for the wicked, and all the proud, the haughty, the unjust flee away and call upon the mountains to cover them and the hills to fall upon them. But a blast from the Lord goeth out after them and consumeth them as stubble; and the thorn and the thistle grow up on their altars, and the sin of Israel is destroyed. And now is there a new Heaven and a new Earth, and all things are restored as at the beginning.

"And I see the New Kingdom of God, as it were an Eden upon the face of the whole Earth. And there is no more any sea, nor any night; for the Glory of God doth lighten it. And there is no more any war or contention, no sorrow or tears, for all men live together as children of God. And there is no hunger or thirst or cold or weariness, for God doth feed them like the ravens and clothe them like the lilies."

Jesus ceased speaking, and after a time the disciples silently resumed their oars. Jesus lay down in the stern of the boat, with his head on a pillow which Mary Magdalene had thrust into the hand of John at the last moment. The place and the situation were very unsuitable for lying

down, but in his extreme exhaustion Jesus fell asleep at once. The night hitherto had been very beautiful. But no sooner had Jesus lain down than the experienced eye of Peter detected a change. First a slight chill in the air, then a thin, gauzy mist appeared, creeping along the face of the water, followed by little puffs of cold wind from the northeast.

Peter gave the alarm at once, and urged his companions to row with all their might. It was none too soon, for a half hour later so deep a darkness fell upon the lake that they could see nothing, and they were lost, not knowing where to steer. Then suddenly, with an awful roar, a hurricane from Lebanon and the Hauran was upon them. They were nearly upset by the first onset, but being all experienced boatmen, they managed to get righted at last, and then found that the rotten old boat was leaking frightfully, and the waves coming in over the sides. There was almost a panic for a moment, but Peter quieted them; and with two men set to bailing and the rest at the oars, they turned the boat's prow towards shore. This they could now do, for tempests such as the one now upon them they well knew never came except from one way; and so, by the direction of the wind, they knew where lay the nearest shore.

But being obliged thus to row directly against the wind, they made very little progress, and at last, with the wind increasing and the darkness no less dense, they began to grow confused and to imagine that the wind had changed, and they began to dispute with one another; some said one thing and some another, and some insisted that they should turn about and go in the opposite direction from their present course. They were nearly all fishermen, and, like fishermen, had many superstitious notions about storms and winds and waters; and now in this extreme peril of their lives they recalled all the weird stories they had ever heard old men tell around the camp fires at night, of Demons,

Wraiths, and Shedim, who not only called up storms but held ships immovable against both sail and oar, and then either dashed them in pieces on the rocks or dragged them down to their mysterious habitations beneath the sea.

John, who had often heard such tales told by his grandfather Joazer, was the first to advance this notion of their being held by the Storm Demon; but it appeared that it was already vaguely in the minds of all, and believing themselves enchanted, some threw down their oars and were going to cast themselves into the sea. But Peter, more calm than the rest, besought them to stand by the oars till he should call up the Master, who was older than any of them and knew the lake well, and whose power over all Demons was well known.

Jesus, through all this noise and confusion, the roar of the storm, the rattle and bang of bailing and the sound of oars, had slept on, and when awakened by Peter was not excited or fearful. He asked about how long they had been rowing, and if they had kept all the time straight towards the wind; and then he told them to keep steadily on and be not afraid, for they would be at land, he said, presently. Almost at once they felt the wind abating and the waves becoming less boisterous; for though they could yet see nothing and knew not where they were, they had come where the high land of the shore protected them from the wind, and the waves, being wrought only from the shore outwards, had not space to gain head.

Rowing now with good courage, they were almost immediately at the land, and drew their boat up on the sand. It was a narrow escape, and many of the disciples looked upon it as a miracle. It was still very dark, and a long time till day; so they turned the boat over, and all creeping under it and disposing themselves as best they could, they slept till morning.

There was a way Jesus had of talking, partly to himself and yet also to his disciples, that often led to misunder-

standings. After thinking over some subject or point profoundly, perhaps all night or during his solitary walks abroad, he would suddenly begin speaking on that subject to the disciples as if they were, like himself, already familiar with it, when in fact they had no idea of what he was talking about. Then again the natural tendency of his mind was so strong to speak in parables and to use allegorical figures that the dull minds of his disciples often could not follow him. Jesus had always been somewhat this way, and the habit was growing upon him.

While Jesus lay cramped under the old boat, he had found it impossible to sleep, and he had been thinking of the causes that had led to his rejection by the people and how easily the Scribes and Pharisees had influenced them to fall back into old ways and old beliefs. Then that thought about his mother's leaven came now, as ever after, as the surest consolation. The truth, he thought, was like the leaven: though it was buried and hid in the meal, it was all the time doing its work; it would finally permeate the whole mass. But then again — direful thought! — there was a kind of leaven of evil also, that of the Pharisees, which he had seen working but now, and whose powerful effects they were then experiencing. That, too, seemed capable of penetrating everywhere and of leavening the whole lump.

Jesus had been turning this over and over in his mind, and so this morning, when they crawled out from under the old boat, lame and stiff and hungry, Jesus began at once to talk about Leaven. Leaven of the Pharisees: they couldn't imagine anything else he could mean but to rebuke them for not having anything provided to eat. To be sure, they had fled away in haste and fear, but there were good women enough who would have given them bread if they had asked for it, and they felt ashamed.

Judas, whose business it was to buy the provisions, offered to go and try to find something; but Jesus said,

No, he had bread to eat that they knew not of; and this again, was a mysterious saying that aroused much conjecture among the disciples, and whispered consultations. They began to see every day and hour something to separate their loved companion and Master more and more from them, and to enshroud him in a deeper mystery. Where could he have got bread to eat that they knew not of!

The disciples already had a very lively sense of Jesus' *power*, especially over the much dreaded demons who possessed people, and now he had shown it in rebuking the Wraiths and Shedim of the sea. Then the growing mysteriousness of his talk impressed them powerfully. It was like the Scripture: every word and letter of which the Rabbis said, meant a hundred thousand different things. Jesus had grown to speak almost wholly in parables and enigmatical language that he seldom explained, and the disciples, with their oriental imaginations inflamed by life-long dwelling on extravagant expectations, let their hopes and fears be their interpreters, and oftentimes arrived at conclusions that sorely tried the patience of the Master.

Furthermore, during this flight into a foreign land, Jesus' habit of going alone into thickets and waste places began to be more a subject of dark and mysterious speculation with the Twelve. Sometimes without any apparent cause Jesus would absent himself and be gone a whole night, to come back so wasted and hollow-eyed as to show that he had not slept. None dared to follow him at such times; but they began to feel sure that, like Moses and Elijah, he had direct communication with the spirit world and the great of old.

After wandering about in a desolate and barren country where they saw no one but some miserable swineherds tending swine, and had nothing to eat but some husks from the Karob tree, such as were fed to the swine, they decided to turn their steps northwards and take refuge in that last

resort of robbers and outlaws, the inaccessible fastnesses of Lebanon. It was a trial not only of faith but of pluck and perseverance such as the disciples had not before experienced, and when Jesus announced his plan there were murmuring and black looks that threatened to break up the band. It was indeed a hard case.

Heretofore, in all their wanderings they had not only been abundantly supplied with all that they needed, but the women, who were always with them, cooked and washed and mended, administering to all their wants, after the manner of women. They had also supplied Judas' bag with money, and furnished tents and other material. Now they had all these things to do for themselves, and their supply of money was very scant, for the circlets of coins and other ornaments offered by the women Jesus had not allowed Judas to take.

After a few days of this homeless, wandering life, sleeping on the ground and cooking what little food they got over smoking fires, they became very dirty and grimy, and looked more like robbers than decent people. The disciples did not so much mind this for themselves, because they were all used to a rough life; but when they saw Jesus forgetful of appearances, growing more rusty and unkempt each day, they were stirred with a sense of unfitness that was quite painful. To see this immaculate one, whose very presence imposed silence and reverential awe, with soiled garments, uncombed locks, and unwashed hands, gnawing at a crust of black bread and broiling a bony little fish over a smoky fire, was at first shocking. Gradually they grew accustomed to it; but, unconsciously with the most of them, their respect for Jesus had diminished: he was brought down from his pedestal, and was again as one of themselves.

Only to Peter, James, and John did he remain the supreme arbiter of souls that he had ever been. This journey or flight was the real turning point in the career

of Jesus. Upon it hinges all subsequent events; by this thread hangs the fate of the world. That the crisis was upon him, Jesus himself felt fully, and the disciples less clearly,—but in their own dull way, as truly. To escape to Lebanon or the morasses of Merom could be only a temporary expedient. To do his work, to accomplish his mission, Jesus knew full well he must face the world, and to relinquish or give up was not in the possibilities of his nature. What he ought to do, that he *must do*, in the face of any difficulty or danger: his very genius compelled him to it. The only question was, what ought he to do *now*!

While Jesus was pondering these things the disciples were also thinking and arguing among themselves. One night, when they were camped by the lake Merom, there was a discussion among the disciples. Jesus had gone off alone, and there was freedom of speech such as was not indulged in when he was present. It was a very solitary place. The great marsh in which the lake is situated stretched out around them for miles, uninhabited by aught but water-buffalos, wild animals, and water fowl. They had a small fire of sticks they had gathered and brought as they came along, and were cooking a pot of mallows for their supper. These they had also gathered, growing wild, as they came along. They were all young fellows, Peter being the oldest, and like young soldiers in bivouac, they must have their joke.

Nathaniel was trying to roast a small fish he had caught by holding it in the fire on the end of a reed. There was very little wind, but that little seemed to come from all directions, first from one way and then from another, so that Nathaniel, though changing his position often from one side of the fire to the other, yet seemed to get the smoke constantly in his eyes. At last, almost smothered and with eyes blinded by a fresh blast of the pungent fumes, he lost his fish in the fire, and turned away to catch

his breath with an angry exclamation that sounded very much like an oath, such as they all used to indulge in about the fishing-fires of Gennesaret.

There was a general laugh at Nathaniel's expense, and Thomas, the joker, in his grim way remarked, "Nat, thou art thinking too much of that pretty wife of yours and the children playing under the fig-trees at Cana, for you to make a good Ishmaelite."

"Ishmaelite indeed! By Usiel and Samchassi, we might better be Ishmaelites than beggars and vagabonds, skulking around in swamps and desert places," retorted Nathaniel, wiping the tears from his eyes with a grimy hand.

"Hut, tut!" warned Peter, somewhat sternly. "What would the Master say if he heard you swear like that!"

"Well, it isn't for you to rebuke me," answered Nathaniel, rather tartly. "It was only yesterday I heard the Master bringing you up rather sharply for swearing. You are the worst one in the lot."

Peter hung his head and said no more, and John mildly interposed. "It is less sin even to swear, brother, than to quarrel," he said. "You know what the Master tells us over and over again, that without brotherly love there is no Kingdom of God for us."

"Kingdom of God!" echoed Judas Iscariot. "This looks a lot like the Kingdom of God. I, for one, am getting about sick of it. I don't mind the hard fare, nor living in swamps and desert places. I didn't find fault with that when I was with Jacobus in his caves; but what I want is to see some use, some good in it. Are we abandoning the whole thing, giving up for good and all? If so, let's say so, and go about our business: if not, why, we've got to face the truth finally, and the quicker the better. We've already thrown away the best chance we'll ever have: I don't believe there'll ever be another time when there'll be so many people ready to fight

for us as there were the other day when they were all so eager to make Jesus King."

Simon Zelotes and several others expressed approval of this last remark of Judas, and even Peter, though inclined to be silent, when directly appealed to by Judas, said, "Yes, I have felt that way myself. It seemed to me as though the time to come out boldly and raise the standard was then; but now let me tell you all, my brothers, *Jesus knows best*. He doesn't tell us all he knows and thinks, and we have got to trust him absolutely. And hasn't it always been so? The prophets and men of God weren't well understood in their day. The people scoffed at them, and kings tried to kill them; but they were always right. And so it is now, only more so; for I tell you now what I have finally made up my mind is true, that our Jesus is a greater than any of the prophets,— that *he is the Messiah of God*."

Peter pronounced these last words with a solemn emphasis, and ceased speaking. For some time there was silence. Then John, and after him James, declared themselves as believing the same as Peter. Then Simon Zelotes spoke.

"I don't understand," he said, "how you can see the Messiah in Jesus. To be sure, he is a man sent of God, as we all believe. But the Messiah, as my father always said, would first appear in a mysterious way, coming from no one knows where. He is to show signs and wonders on earth and in the sky. A rainbow is to span the whole earth and fill it with light like the sun. He will command the sun and the moon like Joshua, and call down the lightnings like Elijah. But our Jesus is not so. We know whence he came. We have known him from a boy up, and he gives no signs such as the Messiah is to give."

No one spoke at first in reply to this speech of Simon's, for they had no answer to it. At last John said, rather faintly, "Jesus has shown *some* signs; he has done *some*

things that none but a prophet could do. We have all seen how he has cast out devils and healed people of diseases."

John was immediately taken up by Judas, who said, "Surely he has done these things, and no one denies that he has power from God; but being the Messiah is another thing, and that is what we are arguing about. And then his miracles of healing are no greater than what are reported of Simon Magus of Samaria, and many of our Rabbis have done greater things than these."

Again a pause, no one finding a ready answer to Judas. Finally John remarked, weakly enough, that Jesus had promised that if they had faith as a grain of mustard seed, they could any of them pluck up a mountain by the roots and hurl it into the sea. To which Judas' answer was prompt. "Yes," he said, "I heard him say that, but I haven't seen anybody doing it, have you?"

There were signs of disapproval in several at this harsh speech of Judas, and Peter admonished him: "If we have not yet learned to move mountains, brother Judas, we *have* learned that kind words are better than harsh ones: let us not forget."

XLIII

UNFOLDING

"But whom say ye, that I am! Peter, answering, said, The Christ of God."—Luke ix-20.

These flights of Jesus, of which this we are describing was the fourth and last, were not from servile fear on the part of Jesus: they were measures of wise precaution. Not only was the time not yet ripe for the final death grapple with the Priestly Hierarchy, but Jesus had not himself come to maturity. There were many questions he had not yet settled in his own mind. There had been suggestions and hints that in various ways had led him to think of himself as the Messiah; but there was, as yet, no clearness.

At first he had rejected the idea as preposterous and impossible; but in one way and another it was continually thrust upon him, and the idea having once found lodgment in his mind, by law of nature it had to grow. The more he thought of it, the more he became convinced that it was true. He began to study the Scripture with reference to it, and he was astonished to find in both Moses and the prophets so much to confirm the idea of his own Messiahship. Then a message from John in prison showed that he, too, had thought of it.

Everything seemed to point that way. Then as to miracles and the redemption of Israel, the Messiah truly was to perform miracles and he was to redeem Israel. Jesus had not yet regarded himself as a miracle-worker. He had given great relief to many sufferers by the omnipotence of sympathy and love and a power within him that he knew not,—a power which he likened to the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound

thereof (seest the effect) but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. Then the redemption of Israel,—that would come in due course, in God's good time and way. The thing now to consider and decide was, in what character should he pursue the great object in view. Should he re-enter Galilee, assuming no higher character than that of a teacher come from God, such as he had originally chosen, or was it now necessary to strike out more boldly and, aiming as he did at the highest, audaciously challenge the Powers of the world by taking to himself the title of the Highest, the Messiah of God?

In thinking and praying over these things, as he did constantly, spending many nights in agony of spirit, wrestling with it in solitude, with no human creature to whom he *could* go for counsel, he did not forget that his mission thus far seemed a failure. Only one human creature in all the world in any measure understood him, and that a poor homeless outcast like himself, and — a woman. As prophet and teacher and man of God, the people had rejected him. There was nothing to be hoped for from them unless under changed conditions. He knew, also, that many, if not all, of his chosen disciples were dissatisfied and rebellious,—their loyalty hung as by a thread.

The next night after leaving lake Merom, Jesus and the disciples camped in a little wild vale where a rivulet of pure, cool water came dashing down from one of the spurs of Hermon. It was a delightful retreat, and with a good fire and plenty to eat they all enjoyed it greatly. They had passed through a very fruitful country that day, and ancient custom allowing it, they had gathered of grains and fruit enough to have what seemed a feast, after their long privations.

The scene and all connected with it was very different from that of the night before. To these young fishermen this Gipsy life was very agreeable when their animal

wants were well supplied. Every day now they saw something new and strange. They had that day come in sight of temples and palaces far up on the mountain side, near where Cæsarea Philippi lay hid behind cliffs and woods. Though anciently a possession of Israel, the country was now wholly heathen, and everywhere were votive tablets and statues of heathen gods. At the mouth of the little ravine where they were camped were niches in a wall of rock filled with marble Naiads and Satyrs of the woods.

They had built their camp-fire amid the ruins of a vast heathen temple, already ancient when Joshua conquered the land. Supper was over, and the disciples were lounging about the fire, joking, telling stories, and making remarks about what they had seen during the day, when Jesus suddenly appeared among them and sat down by the fire. Conversation at once ceased, and all waited in silence for him to speak.

"We are fleeing away," he said at length, "because of Herod and the Scribes and Pharisees. It may have been necessary; but we must finally go back. There is nothing to expect of these heathen we see here; and we cannot go to the dispersed among the Gentiles. God has given me my work to do in the land of my fathers, and there I must finally go. True, I have been rejected and cast out of all men. But why? Whom do the people take me to be? Whom do they say that I am?"

Familiar talk like this had come, of late, to be so rare with Jesus that the disciples were amazed, and for some time no one answered. Peter was the first to speak. "I should say," he replied, "that the greater part of the people look upon you as a teacher or prophet sent from God, one who might be a Judge and Leader like Joshua."

Peter having said this, several of the other disciples expressed their views. One said that the people called him Elijah, and another said Jeremiah, and so on; and at

last Judas said rather shamefacedly that many declared that Jesus was only a sorcerer and had a Devil.

Again silence. At length Jesus, lifting his head from gazing into the fire, and looking around upon the disciples, asked pointedly, "And whom do *you* say that I am?"

The question was directed to no one in particular, but the disciples all looked to Peter for the answer. The situation was a little embarrassing for Peter, for he would have liked to qualify his answer by some "ifs" and "ands"; but he had already declared himself in the presence of all, and he would not now recede. "To me," he said, "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus had lowered his head upon his hands and was gazing again steadfastly into the fire. He did not stir, but by the light of the fire shining in his face the disciples could see that he was deeply moved; they saw the lines about his nose and mouth grow deeper and the great vein on his brow swell and throb, and at last a tear start from his eyes and course slowly down his cheek.

Jesus arose, and going to Peter, put his hand on his shoulder, and said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And this is the rock that God Himself hath laid, and upon it He will build the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God, that waxeth not old nor fadeth away, and against which all Earth and Hell shall not prevail."

Jesus turned away and stood before the fire, with a manner so rapt and intense that the disciples were spell-bound. John and others thought they saw a brightness like a halo about his head. At last Jesus, with face upturned towards the stars, began speaking again. "And I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven! I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast

revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Jesus then turned to the disciples and told them that it would be unwise to make any public declaration of his Messiahship at present. For, as he said, the Authorities would understand it that he had set up to be king, and it would bring upon them at once the power both of Antipas and of Rome. They were not yet ready, he said, for a public announcement. They must go very cautiously and feel their way, for they were in the midst of enemies wherever they might go.

"And," he said in conclusion, "you must settle your minds for a struggle such as you little think of now. To follow me as the Messiah you may see tribulation such as has not been from the beginning. I had hoped to bring peace upon earth and to unite all men in a loving Brotherhood, but I see now that before this can be there may be divisions and strifes; and so I am come to bring not peace but a sword, for in this cause a man's enemies shall be they of his own household. The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, the father the child, and the children rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men, for my name's sake. But fear ye not them that can kill the body; for I say unto you that he who shall endure unto the end the same shall inherit an everlasting crown, laid up for him of my Father from the foundation of the world."

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XLIII

CÆSAREA PHILIPPI

“With regard to the true meaning of these words, I saw their purport to be that Jesus denounced the institution of all human tribunals, of whatever sort; that he meant to say so, and could not have expressed himself otherwise.”—Tolstoi.

The next day Jesus and his disciples went into the city of Cæsarea Philippi, on their way to the mountains of Lebanon. There was so much in this splendid heathen city to excite the wonder and curiosity of these rude, untraveled fishermen that they had to linger and stare before many a nude statue or obscene picture, till they began to attract the attention of the gamins of the street, who first noticed their strange actions and foreign appearance and began to gather about them, jeering and making insulting remarks. Soon a crowd gathered and followed them, for in those days *foreigner* and *enemy* were almost synonymous words. No man was safe out of his own province without official protection.

And so the disciples began to be jostled and pushed, and at length the cry was raised that they were robbers, and they began to be pelted with stones. Jesus, seeing the danger, hurried them along. They finally got clear of the city, and were very thankful at having escaped from a great peril. But the country they now came into, far up on the side of Hermon, was one wholly ill-suited to their manner of life. The nights were very cold, and having now no tents, they were obliged to sleep on the ground in the open air. This they could do very well in sunny Galilee; but here the climate was quite different. Only a little way above them, the snows of Hermon never quite disappeared even in summer. Moreover, they found it

difficult to get food enough to supply their needs. There was not here that abundance of fruits and grains that they had found on the plains and in the valleys below, and the rude country people were made angry and suspicious by their depredations and strange behaviour.

Then not only was it a hard life but apparently a life barren of good results. The disciples soon grew very discontented and even mutinous; they were homesick and despairing; there were murmurings and complainings that threatened the breaking up of the Band. Jesus was perfectly aware of all this, but for some days he did not speak. Much of the time he spent alone, the disciples waiting with gradually lessening faith and hope, and growing each day more discontented and homesick. At the same time Jesus' more frequent withdrawals from them, his silence and abstraction, increased their fear and awe of him to that extent that none hardly dared to speak to him.

At length, one evening, when they were all seated about a fire in one of the little valleys at the foot of Hermon, the disciples still waiting and hoping for Jesus to speak, he suddenly began, in his strange, soliloquizing way, and said, "We are like sheep scared by a fox, thinking it to be a wolf. The foxes only bark from the thicket: the wolves gnaw the very bones."

Jesus said no more, but got up and went away into the night. The disciples, already deeply mystified and alarmed, talked the matter over, and agreed that next morning when Jesus appeared Peter should question him more boldly and make their complaints known.

So next morning Peter asked Jesus to tell them more fully what he meant by wolves gnawing bones, and other allusions. Jesus' growing habit of speaking mysteriously was exercised by him almost unconsciously, and he often did not realize that his talk was entirely unintelligible to his disciples. But he saw now the importance of hav-

ing them understand fully what was before them, and he told them how it appeared to him that the only dangerous enemies they had were not Herod, nor the Romans,—but the Scribes and Pharisees,—the official class, whose headquarters were at Jerusalem. He said it would be of no use to go back to Galilee unless they set their faces towards Jerusalem itself and boldly attacked the evil in its own home and citadel.

This was talk that all could understand, and Peter, as spokesman for the disciples, replied with prompt decision, even showing some impatience. “We will all be very glad to return to Galilee,” he said, “and go on to Jerusalem if thou wilt give the word. We left not Galilee willingly, but only because thou saidst so. We wanted thee to proclaim thyself Leader when the people were wild to have thee and every Zealot in the land was ready to support thee. Then thou couldst have gone to Jerusalem as a King and not as a beggar. It is not too late now. The people will shed their blood for thee as their Leader, like Joshua or Gideon. It is foolish to think of giving up everything to those nabobs at Jerusalem, when thou canst have an army at thy back for the asking.”

As Peter had proceeded, Jesus, sitting by the fire, had turned and fixed his eyes upon him so steadfastly that Peter grew embarrassed, and ended his speech in evident discomposure. Jesus answered sternly: “Peter, this talk is unworthy of thee! Thou art like the Devil, a tempter to do evil! Get thee behind me, and let us hear no more of this.”

For some days after this the little band remained in the neighborhood of Mount Hermon, Jesus for the most part separating himself and going off alone into the mountain. When he was with the disciples, his talk was so strange and enigmatical that they felt more and more their own insignificance in the presence of such a prophet. They regarded his speech like that of Ezekiel and Zech-

ariah, whose splendid figures were to be understood only by the most learned Rabbis. Sometimes Jesus would take notice that the disciples did not understand, and would try to speak more plainly.

One night he apparently started out to tell them more explicitly his ideas of the Kingdom of God. "We see," he said, "how the world is governed. We see especially how these Gentiles exercise lordship over their fellows,—offices and officers multiplied till every groom and messenger of the governor has an office made for him, whereby he may live at ease on the toil and sweat of his fellows; and how for this they bow themselves in the dust and cry, Lord, Lord, and yet towards their fellows are proud, haughty, unjust, cruel.

"We have seen such things all our lives. It has always been so, where Governments have been instituted. We read how it grieved the Lord and Samuel when Israel asked for a king, and how the best of the kings of Israel exercised lordship and demanded service just as these Gentiles do. God so made Man: it is the law of his being that authority begets pride, and pride begets injustice. In the Kingdom of God it will not be so. Every man will be rewarded according to his works. He that doeth well, digging in the vineyard or treading out the wine, shall be as honored, and receive the same as the priest or the lawyer or the doctor. With God, who knoweth the heart, there is no favoritism. We are all His children. Some of you have asked what the worship and sacrifices will be at Jerusalem. There will be no more sacrifices at Jerusalem, nor in any temple. Did not God say by the mouth of His prophet, 'I desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings,' and again He saith, 'For Israel hath forgotten his Maker and builded temples?'

"God will be worshiped, as of old, in spirit and in truth; and every man, like Abraham, will be the priest of

his own household; and there will be no servant and no master, but all will be brethren, the children of their Heavenly Father. And in the New Kingdom there will be no prisons or dungeons or fetters of iron. There will be no more Courts of Law or Judges to judge and condemn their brothers. What man is there who so knoweth the heart of another that he should condemn him? His sin, whatever it be, may have been wrought in him from Achan or Cain. God, who made man, alone can judge him."

By this kind of talk the disciples were again thrown into confusion and doubt. It was only a day or two ago that Jesus was telling them that he came to bring not peace, but a sword, division and strife. And since then he had constantly insisted on non-resistance, and was daily presenting pictures of the New Kingdom, that made it appear like Eden before the Fall and on which rested no shadow of strife or violence. How *could* these things be? Peter asked the question, and Jesus answered by the parable of the mustard seed and his favorite one of the leaven.

"A truth from God," he said, "once cast into the seed-field of Time, *must* grow and prosper: all the efforts of men and devils cannot prevent it. They can only hinder and obstruct, and their obstructions are only like damming up one of these torrents that come down from Hermon: when the dam is full and the flood comes, all is swept away like a spider's web, and the innocent and the guilty in its path alike perish.

"Were they upon whom the tower of Siloam fell guilty above others? I tell thee nay, and so it will be when the Son of Man cometh in the clouds and with power. The law of God, that the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children, remains unchanged forever; and a sword will surely go out after iniquity, and good and bad alike will suffer. But it is for God alone to execute

this law, and not at all for man. And those whom God employs to use the sword He cuts off with a sword. It needs be that offenses come, but woe unto him by whom they come."

Then Peter asked about the government of the world under the New Kingdom. "If there are to be no Courts of Law, no judges or trials, no jails or prisoners, how then is the world to be governed?" he asked.

To this Jesus made answer: "If a man or a woman doeth ill, their nearest friend will go to them privately, and in perfect love as a brother warn the offending one and exhort him to repent, return, and do ill no more. If this be done in true love it will seldom fail; but if the brother or sister harden their heart and refuse, then will two or more near friends go to them and tell them their fault between them alone; and if they neglect to hear them, then shall the sin of that man or woman be made public in the community where they live, and if they still persist in their evil way, then shall that man or woman be turned away and cut off from all friendly intercourse with old friends and neighbors, and become to them as heathen and publicans."

Then Jesus told the parables of the goodly pearl and the hidden treasure, and then addressing his disciples more directly, he said, "And so it is now; if any man would come after me, he must give up all and not look back, for the time is at hand when you all will be tried as in the fining pot,—a time when whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Jesus paused and sat for some time silent, while the disciples, not yet understanding clearly what Jesus meant and troubled with doubts, whispered among themselves, hardly daring to question further. At length Peter, moved to it by James and John, asked faintly, "Master, thou sayest that in the New Kingdom there will be no

servant and no master, and yet that those who forsake all shall be more richly rewarded than others. What, then, shall *we* have, who have forsaken all and followed thee?"

Jesus did not at once answer Peter's question but kept looking steadfastly at the fire, as if he did not hear. After a time Peter repeated his question a little more loudly and again waited, while all the disciples hung breathless upon the answer. It came at last, spoken very slowly, as if the vision of it were being evolved before his eyes.

"Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my sake but he shall receive a hundredfold, now in this time, houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life. And ye also, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. For the Son of Man shall surely come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he will reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom."

Jesus ceased speaking, and folding his cloak about him, walked away into the darkness, leaving the disciples stunned and speechless.

THEY SHOULD SIT ON TWELVE THRONES, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

XLV

THE TRANSFIGURATION

“ And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.”— Luke ix-29.

The next day Jesus took Peter and James and John, and went away up to the rocky barrens of the loftier peaks of Hermon. The way was steep and the ascent toilsome. Just before nightfall they reached a little sheltered nook not far below the snow-line of Hermon, and there they prepared to spend the night. It was a cold, bleak spot at any time, and now a keen and furious wind from the snowy peaks of Lebanon chilled these children of tropical Galilee to the very marrow, and made them wonder more than ever at this strange ordering of the Master.

During the whole ascent Jesus had hardly spoken; he had appeared like a man weary, discouraged, and spent. It was a repetition of many days that had passed, only more pronounced and noticeable. Since their flight began it had become evident that Jesus was much changed from what he had been.

In those joyous days when, with a full purse, they had fed the multitude and were greeted each recurring morning with enthusiastic acclaim, Jesus had taken it all in with a quiet joy and happiness that, in the old phrase, made his face to shine. In those days, too, he loved to see the young people dance in the green meadow to the sound of pipe and timbrel, and to listen to their laughter and their songs. He could join in their innocent mirth; he loved, in the free companionship of friends, to sip a sup of good old wine, untroubled by any doubt that the Good Father gave all things for the use of His children. By such free living, he even at one time brought upon himself a severe

rebuke from former brethren, the more severe and Judaistic disciples of John. He was accused of gluttony and wine-bibbing, and not without some show of reason. Jesus believed in a life of innocent joy and happiness. What, indeed, was to be the New Kingdom of God but a return to Paradise, where one thing only was forbid!

Now, all this seemed changed. The good Master, who formerly had been the light and life of the Brotherhood, whose buoyant cheerfulness had borne them up through many a darksome hour, was himself cast down. True, he still talked of a glorious end, but it was distant and unseen, and to be gained by pains and horrors such as he sometimes said had not been before from the beginning of time.

Moreover, in person Jesus had grown haggard and wan and thin; he had lost his calmness and serenity; he moved about from place to place without apparent cause, and tried to conceal himself from all the world. Though he spent whole nights alone, it was said, in secret prayer, he seldom prayed with the disciples, and then only in the formal Jewish way. What could it all mean!

It was nearly night when Jesus and the three disciples arrived at their destination. The sky was overcast and the mountain shrouded in mists that the fierce north wind rolled and tossed in billowy masses or tore into streamers and wild fantastic shapes that appeared to the awed and trembling disciples like mountain sprites holding wild carnival and ghostly dance. They were more than ever assured that Jesus was a prophet having power over spirits both good and bad. They saw explained his solitary vigils in deserts and mountain tops. There, like Moses and Elijah, he was wont to summon up the dead, and to talk with God.

Now for the first time, they were to be perhaps, companions in these mysteries. Night closed down upon

them, dark and stormy, and in their sheltered nook, huddled about a smouldering fire, they watched and waited, believing implicitly that they were here to be made witnesses of unnamed mysteries. They were startled by every gust, every rustling leaf and falling ember, as if it were the footstep of a Heavenly Messenger. But the long hours passed, and no angel appeared. Jesus sat mute and motionless before the fire, and gave no sign.

Exceeding weariness at last overcame the disciples, and with clouds and darkness and the roaring wind about them, they fell asleep. When they awoke it was morning. The unclouded sun was shining in their eyes, the winds were at rest, and all the scene transformed as if by magic. They were amazed, and looking about for Jesus, they saw him standing above and apart on a little platform of rock, looking out over a scene such as is rarely to be seen in this world.

Before him, spread out like a map, was all the land promised unto Abraham and to his seed forever. Through the clear, pure air and lighted by the rising sun, he could see almost the whole of it. Eastward, Damascus, with its orchards and groves and towers, and beyond it the vast plain of the desert stretched away to the ancient home of his race beyond the Euphrates. Westward, Tyre and Sidon, with all their ships behind them, and beyond, the great blue sea. Ancient Dan lay at his feet; and far away southward, beyond flowery Galilee and the lake, beyond winding Jordan and Tabor and Nebo and the Samaritan hills, blazing like a tongue of flame, the gold-roofed towers of his Father's Temple at Jerusalem.

As Jesus gazed upon this scene, there flashed through his mind all that it suggested and implied. He thought what a Paradise of God it might be, and what a scene of sin and misery it was. And this Paradise, this Kingdom of God, he himself had promised: as the very messenger of

God, he was sent to establish it. What, then, was he doing here, a fugitive and outlaw, fleeing like Jonah to evade the command of God, and for fear!!

The thought sent the hot blood surging to his pale cheeks; his heart swelled within him; his bent form sprang erect and dilated; in eye and lip and brow and all about him was the look of a King: he had made his great resolve! Pain, ignominy, death were as nothing to him now: he had won a first clear victory over them all, and his soul was singing its new birth and battle hymn.

While this was passing in Jesus' mind and heart, the disciples were gazing upon him in amazement. They saw the transformation, well enough named *Transfiguration*, and thought it supernatural. Then at the moment a cloud of vapor, curling and winding in weird, fantastic forms, arose from below, and as it enveloped Jesus, partly hiding him from view, it was shot through with sun rays as by fire, and they heard Jesus speaking the names of Moses and Elias.

The disciples, awed beyond measure, fell on their faces and worshiped, while the cloud closed in about them and hid all things from view.

XLVI

SIMON'S FEAST

"Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him."
— John xii-42.

When Jesus returned to Galilee, he had a tone and manner so different from what he had shown before that the disciples were astonished. Instead of hesitating and being undecided, and in a measure fearful, Jesus was now prompt, decided, and, more than all, bold; he began to think more of his old friend and cousin John, and *his* utter fearlessness. He often spoke of him in terms of love and admiration; he said he was greater than any of the ancient prophets. Like John he began to denounce more openly and to their faces the priests and lawyers and doctors who opposed him. For this last, Jesus was now more than formerly sought and patronized by a certain class of the rich and ambitious Pharisees.

As is ever the case in all times and among all nations, there were in Palestine the Ins and the Outs, those holding place and power and those excluded therefrom. Annas and Caiaphas, with other leaders of the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, were of that priestly craft, the Sadducees, and were in favor with the all-powerful Romans. Then the hatred between the schools of Shammai and Hillel, that is, the Democrats and the Aristocrats, was being revived. The Sadducees were all Aristocrats and held by Hillel, while many of the Pharisees were Democrats and held by Shammai.

There had been much bad blood between these factions, and their secret enmity was still bitter. The provincial Rabbis and Pharisees were all Shammaites and jealous of the priestly Sadducees, who held the chief offices and all the

power. Even Simon of Capernaum, taking offense at the overbearing haughtiness of the Jerusalem cabal, had broken off his Sadducean affiliations, and was now counted on as a Nationalist and opposed to Rome. And so Simon, like many other Pharisees, had begun to consider if Jesus, with his radical ideas about Democracy and his Democratic following, might not be made serviceable in lowering the presumptuous pride of that tyrannical cabal at Jerusalem, which, leagued with Rome, had grown intolerable even to rich Pharisees who were excluded from its secret counsels and from participation in its profitable business.

Jesus' return to Galilee was accompanied with such unmistakable evidences of power, not only in his own bold attitude but in the increased number and enthusiasm of his followers, that the class of rich "Discontents" just mentioned were stirred to take measures to gain him.

A number of rich men, "Rulers" so called, from Jerusalem came to Capernaum, among whom were Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. They attended upon Jesus' preaching, and made expensive and luxurious feasts for him. They flattered him in many ways, calling him "Master," and "Good Master," hoping to draw him away and separate him from his low and degraded following. And yet at these feasts Jesus was not treated as quite an equal. None of his disciples was admitted, and he himself was not greeted by his host with the usual kiss, nor did his host anoint his head with oil, as he did more honored guests; neither did the head servant bring water for the washing of his hands and feet.

Jesus overlooked these slights, though, as it appeared in one instance, he was annoyed by them. He took everything in good part, talking freely and most entertainingly with his hosts as he ate their rich food and drank of their rare old wines; but he was not the least changed or drawn away. And though they persevered almost to the

last, they felt at the end of each feast that Jesus was hopelessly "impracticable."

At one of these feasts at the house of Simon an incident occurred that so shocked even the liberal-minded Joseph and Nicodemus that it required some days before they could again look upon Jesus with tolerance. To understand this incident we must go back a little.

When Jesus retreated to Cæsarea Philippi he had forbidden the women to follow him. They were all eager to go, and Mary Magdalene especially insisted, with a passionate earnestness that aroused some sad misgivings in Jesus' mind. But it seemed impracticable for them to share such a journey into a foreign country, with all its exposures and hardships, and Jesus would not permit it. When he came back to Capernaum, the women were the first to give him a welcome; but Mary was not among them. Jesus' cautious inquiries about her were met by significant shrugs and evasions, and he was obliged to go himself down into the lowest slums of the city to prosecute his inquiries. He got sure trace of Mary, and found, as he had feared, that she had been drawn away by drink and evil company and had been again a notorious offender in Capernaum.

She had been haled before the Judge, Simon the Pharisee, for outrageous conduct, and had been punished by his order. But Mary herself Jesus did not find. He was satisfied that she was not far away, and left word with the easy, good-natured Greek wine merchant and keeper of a low resort, that he wanted her to help him. The wine merchant himself seemed kindly and sympathetic. He said it was a pity so fine a woman should go astray. "I hated to see it," he said apologetically, "as much as you yourself, sir; but I didn't see how I could help it." The same excuse, originated by ancient Cain and repeated to-day by every pander and whiskey vender in Christendom.

Meantime Mary was not unaware that Jesus was seeking her. At one house where he was inquiring, she was in an adjoining room, and heard with palpitating heart his kindly words and gentle voice speaking of her. She would then have rushed out and thrown herself at his feet, begging forgiveness, but her condition forbade it. When she had sufficiently recovered from her debauch to go about, she was sorely straightened to know how to proceed. Jesus had again become the center of such throngs that it was difficult for one like her to approach him on such an errand. The women who attended upon his person she knew would repel her with scorn, and the disciples would look coldly upon her. Then she chanced to learn that Jesus was the guest at dinner of her old Master and late Judge, Simon the Pharisee, and she resolved instantly upon what she would do. And so it came about that at Simon's banquet an incident occurred which was extremely shocking to respectable Pharisaism.

To appreciate fully what follows, it must be borne in mind that at a Jewish feast no woman could be present in any capacity; also, that for a Rabbi to take any notice of a woman, even his own wife or daughter, in a public place was to offend against all rules and to lose caste; and to publicly speak to and touch such a woman as Mary Magdalene was almost unthinkable: it was as shocking to Rabbinism as it would be to a fashionable party now for a guest to engage in conversation with one of the servants.

On this occasion Jesus arrived rather late, and after all the other guests were assembled. The servants noted that the sandals he left at the door were old and worn, that his dress was poor, and that he came afoot and unattended; and so no one brought water and washed his feet, as was done for other guests, and Simon, fearing that Jesus was Levitically unclean, would not endanger himself by offering him the customary kiss or the oil for his head. Some of the other Rabbis present, either less

scrupulous or more diplomatic, gave the kiss of fellowship, and Jesus, as his custom was, took the lowest place at the foot of the table.

When the water was brought by the servant for the washing of hands, Jesus washed, as did the others, though it was well known that he publicly disregarded that rite; and when the wine was brought for the first cup before eating, he partook of it like the rest, and asked a separate blessing for this cup. He ate, though sparingly, of all the good things that were offered at table, and drank, in the same way, of the rare old wines that Simon took some pride in presenting.

Conversation, meantime, had become animated. Of course, at the house of a Pharisee and on such an occasion, there could be but one theme, "the Law" and its bearings upon present conditions. The one great question, whether a strict Jew could lawfully pay tribute to Rome, was discussed at length, and Jesus, though very cautious in his utterances on this point, was noted as saying that it mattered little at present about Roman taxation.

"No great injury," he said, "can come upon a man or a nation from without. If we are right within ourselves, if we love one another, are merciful and kind and just, nothing can do us permanent harm. The proud, cruel, unjust man or nation suffers in the end far more than those who have to *bear* the wrongs. You Pharisees, it seems to me, are all wrong in this regard; you think it wrong to pay tribute to Cæsar, but you pay willing tribute to the Devil. You roll in luxury,—as witness this table, spread with costly and even unwholesome viands, while within a bow-shot of where we sit there are hundreds of wretched women and children, the seed of Abraham, who have not enough of barley bread to satisfy their hunger; and the very taxes that you complain so much about are mainly paid by these poor.

"You rich ones compound with the publicans to es-

cape your rightful share. You Priests and Lawyers and Doctors are a greater burden to this People than the Romans. You live at ease and in luxury while the People toil and starve. The Romans in various ways make valuable return for what they exact. What valuable return do you make! I tell you, friends, it is with this, as with every thing else, our system is rotten at the core; we put on an outside show of beauty and truth and justice, and try to convince ourselves that we thereby give expression to the spirit that is within.

“We have the most costly and magnificent Temple in the world at Jerusalem, erected, as was said, for the worship of God by an idolatrous tyrant. It was surely built by cruel exactions from the people, and is used to-day as the stronghold of a gang of priestly thieves to rob and oppress the people. You Lawyers and Priests and Doctors are everywhere building for yourselves splendid mansions, with parks and gardens and pleasant fountains, all very beautiful; and to the stranger who did not observe the mud huts, the poverty and squalor, of those who build and take care of these beautiful homes of yours, it would seem that the land is very prosperous,—he would say, ‘What a happy land!’ and of the Temple at Jerusalem, ‘What a wonderful monument of piety towards God.’

“You Lawyers, Priests, and Doctors count yourselves learned because you can repeat the sayings of Hillel and Shammai and other great Rabbis, and can argue at length about the lawfulness of eating an egg laid by a hen on the Sabbath, or of killing a louse that is troubling you on that day. You think yourselves pious because you pray in the prescribed fashion, wear broad phylacteries and costly fringes, avoid the touch and even the breath of all poor laboring men, wash your hands in a certain way, and use no dish or cup that has not been rinsed a certain

number of times and in a certain way, and do a great many other such senseless things.

“Now, can you not see that all this is false and hollow, and is more hypocrisy and falsehood than sincerity and truth. Don't let us talk about the oppression of the Romans till we do justice among ourselves. What good is it to have the outside of pots and kettles and all food dishes scoured and polished, if the inside is foul with putrid rottenness and all uncleanness.”

There were some scowling brows among the guests at this plain talk of Jesus; but Simon was too much a man of the world to show any offense. Jesus was a guest and had a guest's privilege. Then he spoke with such lofty dignity, so kindly, slowly, and even sadly, that an angry reply would have appeared shocking and out of place. The guests were all high-bred gentlemen of ancient lineage, and were not easily betrayed into indiscretions. They looked upon Jesus as, indeed, an extremely remarkable man, but as having so lately sprung from the common people as not to be expected to show any refinement. *They, as gentlemen*, must be considerate.

Besides, Simon and his guests were opposed to the cabal of Annas, and applied Jesus' strictures to them and not so much to themselves. They still hoped that Jesus might be used to their advantage. Some of them even commended Jesus for his boldness, and one addressing him as “Good Master,” was about to ask a question, but Jesus, interrupting him, said, “Call me not good; there is one only who deserves that title, that is God, and I am only a servant of God,—a Son, if I do His will.”

“True,” answered the Rabbi, “but allow me to ask what your idea is about these poor laboring people, who you say suffer such hardships and injustice. How else can it be with them than as it is? God has made men very unlike by nature: to some he has given great powers

and noble qualities of mind and heart, and others he has made weak and foolish and incapable. Thou wouldst not serve all alike,— the great Rabbi as the vile camel-driver? ”

Jesus answered mildly. “ I would have every man question himself: ‘ Who made thee to differ from another ! ’ If God gave thee great gifts, was it to exalt and serve thyself that he gave them, or that thou mightest the better serve the world? I know not what God’s plan is in the regeneration of the world as regards this matter, but I do know this much, that in the Kingdom of God that is surely to come, he who faithfully, as in God’s sight, performs his task, be it to drive a camel or to rule a kingdom, shall receive equally of the good things of this life.”

Here, at last, was a new conception of things that fairly took the breath away: a camel-driver, the lowest of the Amhaartz, to be equal with a Rabbi! After all, it was true, as reported, Jesus, with all his great gifts, was insane,— he had a Devil. Simon and his guests exchanged glances of understanding, and the subject was dropped.

Dinner was now ended, and the servants brought in the after-dinner wine. Simon, to keep up a show of fellowship, asked Jesus what his view was about the blessing to be asked over after-dinner wine. This wine, being what was known as spiced wine, made up by mingling the best wine with honey and caper-buds, required, according to the school of Hillel, a double blessing, because it was a mixed product, while according to the school of Shammai, one blessing, as over ordinary wine, was enough. Simon asked Jesus if he held with Hillel in this, or with Shammai. Jesus knew that the discussion of this subject between the schools at Jerusalem had once led to blows and bloodshed, and Simon was known to entertain very decided views on this subject. But Jesus did not quibble; he answered gravely that he thought the matter of no consequence in itself, and then he advanced the shocking opinion that formal prayers and blessings were multiplied

beyond all reason, and should be curtailed rather than increased.

No one seemed disposed to press the point, and while they sipped their wine Simon brought forward some of the questions of the day, connected with his office as magistrate in Capernaum. The social evil, divorce, and disregard of the marriage relation, he said, were growing every day, till they overshadowed the land. The women were fast losing their old-time modesty and simplicity and love of home and children, and were becoming bold and mannish and, to a large extent, lewd. He said he had exercised great severity towards them, but still offenses of this nature continued to increase. He asked Jesus what his view of the subject was.

Again Jesus advanced ideas on this subject more shocking to many of his hearers than anything he had said before. He said that though it was commonly known that social conditions were as represented, the women were least of all to blame for it. The men, he said, were at bottom wholly responsible. Women were naturally modest and simple, and loved their husbands and children and homes above all else: if they did not now do so as formerly, it was because of the sins of men. On this subject Jesus had shown from the first an excitement that refused to be concealed; his tone still remained low, but the lines on his face and brow deepened and his voice, though guarded, took on a ring and cadence that was almost startling.

"I have never known," he continued, "a single instance of a woman going wrong where a man or men were not the cause."

At that moment, from a little-used and unguarded passage the veiled figure of a tall and graceful woman glided into the great banqueting hall, and without pause or hesitation cast herself at Jesus' feet, uttering no word but sobbing violently. Jesus' feet were bare, and his long journeys afoot had left their mark. The rawhide thongs

that bound his sandals had chafed and worn, and across the instep, where the cords had drawn, his feet were raw and bleeding. The woman observed this with increased pain and tears, and impulsively unfastening her veil, she brought out a small flask of perfumed oil, such as oriental women carry about with them, and began to anoint Jesus' feet.

The unclasping of her veil unloosed also the great mass of her hair, which hung in tangled profusion, and her tears, flowing abundantly, fell upon Jesus' feet, and she wiped them away with her hair. When Jesus first became conscious of the woman at his feet, he raised himself from his reclining position at table, and sat erect, facing her. Simon and his guests also arose. They were shocked and scandalized beyond measure, but were too self-contained to make a scene.

The woman's veil had fallen, though she was entirely unconscious of it, and those nearest could see her face,—a face only too well known in Capernaum. Those who were near drew back to those standing farther away on the other side, and in a few whispered words communicated the knowledge that it was Mary of Magdala, whereupon some of the guests exchanged knowing looks and more whispers, and a smile passed between the younger men, but the older Rabbis only frowned and maintained a dignified silence.

Simon's first impulse was to call in his slaves and forcibly expel the intruder, but his habitual reserve restrained him and he did not speak, but stood looking at Jesus and Mary with an air of frigid hostility. Jesus was perfectly well aware that the offense was rank; he was himself shocked by Mary's almost violent infringement of ancient custom and usage; he would have forbidden such an exhibition with emphasis, had it been left to him. But he could not now, with chiding, add the last straw to Mary's burden of shame and misery. He put his hand on her

bowed head and spoke to her kindly, then turning to Simon, he met his stony gaze with serene magnanimity.

“Simon,” he said, “I have somewhat to say unto thee. Thou art offended because I have allowed this woman to approach and minister unto me in thy house. I pray you to look no more upon such things in the light of tradition and usage, but in the light of truth and justice. This woman is well known to me, as to thee; her sin is doubtless greater than most others, and has been public and notorious. She has sought to make her repentance and her penance the same. This that she has done was no easy or pleasant thing for her to do. She is, as thou knowest, a daughter of Abraham, and hath borne the yoke in her youth. If her sin has been great, so likewise is her sorrow. If much is to be forgiven, much, she thinks, is required. She is, as a great debtor, discharged of *his* debt, freely and for love. Let me tell thee a story. There was a certain creditor who had two debtors,—the one owed five hundred pence, the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?”

Simon answered coldly that he supposed the right thing to say was, that he to whom most was forgiven would love most.

“Thou hast answered rightly,” answered Jesus. “See in this woman the debtor who owed five hundred pence, and in thyself, if thou wilt, he who owed fifty, for even *thou* art not without offense. I entered into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet: but this woman hath washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time she came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, this woman’s sin, which is great, is

forgiven, and she loveth much ; thy sin also, in this so little, is forgiven, and thou lovest little."

Then placing his hand again gently on Mary's head, he said to her aloud, so all could hear,

"Thy love hath saved thee, and thy sins are forgiven ; go in peace."

And Mary, for the first time conscious of her disheveled condition, gathered up her hair and fastened again her veil and went out.

XLVII

RADICAL

"Our expense is almost all for conformity. It is for cake that we run in debt; it is not the intellect, not the heart, not beauty, not worship, that costs so much. Why needs any man be rich."—Emerson.

About this time, the company following Jesus having become too great for efficiency or convenience, Jesus decided to send forth a number of his chief disciples separately to work as preachers and healers as he himself was doing. As was fitting, before going forth to work independently, Jesus felt that it was necessary to give those who were about to depart a special charge. They were all rough laboring men, unlearned, rude in speech, whose only qualifications for such work were intense earnestness and devotion to the Master. Like Jesus himself, they were to preach the immediate coming of the Messiah to scourge and to bless; and their evidence, like that offered by Jesus of the truth of what they taught, was to be, as the prophet had foretold, that the sick and lame and blind should be healed, and that the poor should have the gospel preached unto them. It was all very simple; yet there was need of special instruction, and there were questions to be asked and answered. The night before they were to start out on this missionary tour they were camped in one of those beautiful, flowery, little valleys that make down from the mountains of Ammon and Gilead, on the east of Jordan. The water-course through it, which was dry as ashes in Summer, was now vocal with a babbling stream of pure, sparkling water, and grass and flowers were everywhere.

Supper had been served in the open air, and Jesus and the twelve were enjoying their cup of wine in blissful

ease and companionship. The women, of whom a dozen or more were now in attendance, had provided a couch of pillows for Jesus, on which he was reclining. Gradually, and contrary to ancient usage, these women had come to be admitted to fellowship in this small circle of friends on almost equal terms. It was the tradition of their nearness to Jesus that a few years later gave to their sex a recognized place of authority in the first Christian Church.*

On this occasion they were present and taking part in the conversation. Jesus asked them and all the disciples who had instruments of music, to play and sing, which they did, Jesus joining in the singing heartily. They sang the old familiar songs they had all learned while children at home, and though there were many tear-dimmed eyes, it was a happy time, and the tears were sweet tears, if also sad. Mary of Magdala alone did not join in the singing, and no one urged her. She sat apart among them, but not of them. While they were singing a great number of instruments struck up among the crowd of those who had come to hear Jesus and who were camped near by.

Presently they saw a company of young girls, dressed all in white, come forth on a little green plot on the opposite side of the stream, and begin, in time with the unseen music, a mazy, winding dance, with singing. To one side a grove of orange trees were in bloom, and beyond, in the background, against the cliff, an old Hittite ruin, with its broken columns of white marble, stood out rugged, but vague and shadowy in the moonlight. It was a charming scene, and Jesus and the disciples ceased their singing to gaze and listen.

"It is a lesson for us," Jesus said at length. "God hath spoken to us many things by the mouth of His prophets; but he speaks to us every day, and more plainly

* See Romans xvi.

than by any prophet, the things that pertain to His peace. These children, sporting on the green, are an emblem of the Kingdom of God; so are the lilies about their feet, the birds that sing in the trees,—all are innocent and care-free, and how beautiful they are! Who can help loving them!

“So ye who are about to go forth as heralds of the New Kingdom, take no thought for yourselves, what ye shall eat and what ye shall drink or wherewithal ye shall be clothed; but be like these children, the lilies, and the birds, that offend no man, and are a joy and delight to all. And so only shall ye commend by your example the life which you preach. It is the cares of this world that degrade men. Be ye therefore without care; remember the birds, who sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns, but their Heavenly Father feedeth them; also the lilies, which toil not, neither do they spin, and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God so clothe the grass of the field and so feed the fowls of the air, shall he not more clothe and feed you? Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and God noteth the fall of every one of them. The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Ye are of more value than many sparrows.

“Go forth, therefore, preaching the New Kingdom by example more than by word; let your presence be a joy and a blessing in every household. Provide nothing for your journey, not even a staff, nor a purse for money, nor script, nor shoes, nor two coats, but depend wholly upon God for whatsoever ye have need of. Then be sure that in all things your lives be right,—right in thought and word and deed. It is the perfect man alone whom God makes truly His son and heir, and to whom He gives power over all evil. The perfect man need fear nothing whatever in this world. The pestilence that walks abroad at noonday cannot hurt him, nor demons, nor sorcerers,

nor witches, nor serpents, nor scorpions. Be ye therefore perfect, and then will your light shine: you will fear nothing, and you will be able to do anything. You can remove mountains; you can say to this sycamore tree that spreads its branches over our heads, 'Be thou plucked up and cast into the sea,' and it will be done. The power that worketh in you is the power of God, and there is no limit to that.

"Then to heal the sick, to restore the blind, to make the lame walk, you must entirely forget self and put yourself in the place of the sufferer. You must have compassion, and feel as he feels. As the prophet declared, you must bear others' griefs, be wounded yourselves for their transgressions, be bruised for their iniquities, and be chastened for their peace. You must be willing to bear their infirmities, whatsoever they are. **THEN WILL THE POWER OF GOD FLOW THROUGH YOU TO THE HEALING OF THE WORLD.**"

Jesus paused. He had spoken on these high themes at other times, but always, before this, more obscurely and tentatively. The disciples were troubled, and there was some whispering among them.

At last John, who had grown to be a favorite of Jesus, asked diffidently, "Lord, we need more faith; how shall we obtain it?"

Jesus answered, "First by prayer. In prayer the soul of a man, if purified wholly of self, goes back to its Source,—to God, the Creator of the Universe,—and unites with Him and works with Him. To such an one nothing is impossible: he works in unison with God and must prevail. But as with the camel passing through the eye of a needle, so is it hard for a man to get free from Self. The life also must be right: he who would be a true disciple and become God's messenger of peace must not only sell and give up all worldly possessions, but he must break every earthly tie. Father, mother, brother, sister,

even wife and children, must become, as it were, hateful to him.

“Yea, and more. If there be aught of carnal desire or earthly lust lingering in him, he must hew it in sunder, cut it off, as did Samuel, Agag and Elijah, the prophets of Baal. If thy hand or thy foot offend, cut them off and cast them from thee; or if thine eye, pluck it out. He that is able to receive this, let him receive it.”

The disciples were more than ever troubled and the women drew their veils about their faces. No one durst question further about these dark problems. But Peter at last, to break the silence, asked, “Master, when we go forth to preach, where shall we go? Wilt thou that any of us go into Samaria?”

“Not at this present time,” answered Jesus promptly. “Only *now* to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, for the Great Day is at hand, and I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come.”

XLVIII

FANTASY

"Socrates and Pascal were not exempt from hallucinations. Physicians know the name of the disease, which made the fortune of Mahomet."—Renan.

Again, at this season, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea and other Pharisees who were opposed to the rule of Annas and Caiaphas were among the crowd who came out from Jerusalem, and one night they came to Jesus' tent to talk with him. Some of them had been deeply impressed with Jesus' teachings, and were honest inquirers after truth. Jesus knew this, and received them gladly. Like all men, he had the human desire for sympathy. It was a pleasure beyond expression for him to have some one to talk to, who could, in some measure at least, understand and appreciate what he said.

"We beg of thee not to be offended, Good Master," began Nicodemus, "but there are some things that are hard for us to understand, and we have come to thee to have them made plain to us. First, it doth now appear that thou dost claim to be the true Messiah, the Son of the Highest, and we pray thee to show us how this may be."

As in his former talk with Nicodemus, Jesus now kindly explained how he had been led along gradually to look upon himself as the Messiah, and then by many references to Scripture he sought to prove that he was the long-looked-for of Moses and the prophets. Neither Nicodemus nor Joseph made any objections, and, indeed, they were astonished at the array of Scripture texts that Jesus quoted to prove his case. They would consider the matter, they said.

Then Nicodemus asked further: "You preach everywhere now a New Kingdom, a Kingdom of God, as you say. Teach us what we are to understand by that."

Jesus, with more precision than he commonly used in his public discourse, explained at some length what the Kingdom of God was to be. He spoke with such perfect certainty and conviction,—as Nicodemus said in relating it, "with such authority,"—that it was impossible for the most obdurate unbeliever not to be impressed. Jesus explained in the most lucid, forcible, and logical manner, how, if all men would put away all evil and become as little children, kind, gentle, innocent, and loving one another as true brethren, the world would at once be a place of perfect peace and happiness,—a true Kingdom of God. He showed how it was by wars, enmities, envyings, jealousies, and injustices of all sorts that God's beneficent designs towards man were frustrated, and the world, instead of being, as planned, an Eden such as was given to Adam and Eve, had become a Hell.

He made plain how simple and easy it would be to change all this, if men would only become changed in heart and become as little children; if they would, as he said in grand hyperbole, be "born again." Such a radical change in the constitution of the world, he said, had been the dream of John, and was perfectly consistent with the plan of the Creator towards Man. Twice, he said, God had put all men and the world in a state of innocence and purity. First, with Adam and Eve, and again with Noah. In the later case, He had destroyed all the wicked by a flood, and now He would do the same by fire. Now, as in the days of Noah, the greater part of the rich, the great, the proud, would obdurately reject all good counsel and would have to be destroyed.

To all this Nicodemus and the others yielded an involuntary but entire assent: they were carried away by the earnestness, the enthusiasm, and the eloquence of Jesus.

Even by his wonderful mastery of Scripture and readiness of quotation, they as Jews were convinced. Still, there were some questions to ask. Nicodemus wanted to know about being born again. The figure was somewhat extravagant, even for Orientals, and Nicodemus asked to have it explained. Jesus was quite ready, for since the conversion of Mary of Magdala this idea of a new birth had taken a deep hold upon him, and he had thought it all out many times.

“Before the Kingdom of God can come on earth,” he said, “men must be completely changed in heart; they must be made, as it were, new creatures,—as much so as to be born again. The secret motives that inspire and direct all the actions of men must be radically changed. Under the present World System, in which Religion and Politics and Business are only parts,—wheels, as you might say, in the Great Machine,—all working and striving is first of all for Self. No one forgets Self in aught he does. And so we see this fierce spirit of strife, competition, entering into everything. It is nation against nation, city against city, tribe against tribe, verily, family against family, and brother jealous and envious of brother. No good can ever come of this. No Kingdom of God can come to men with hearts like this. It is not, therefore, too much to say that men must be born again; and they may well be so. Some I have known have been so changed; and what is possible for one is possible for all. We are all God’s children. Instead of working wholly for self and his personal life man may forget self entirely and work solely for others and for the life of the world. Such a change is like a new birth: it is being born again.”

Nicodemus and his compeers were philosophers enough to comprehend this talk of Jesus, and being just men, their minds and consciences approved it. But there were yet other questions to ask. Jesus had been reported as saying that the end of the world was at hand, and that he,

as the Messiah, would shortly appear in the clouds, with Angels. When Nicodemus asked about this, the whole manner and attitude of Jesus was changed. From the calmly reasoning philosopher and scholar, using facts and figures with iron logic, he at once became what seemed to Nicodemus and the rest a wild enthusiast and dreamer. While before he had used Scripture to prove everything, and sat like the most dignified Rabbi teaching his school, now he arose abruptly at the question of Nicodemus, and began walking back and forth without speaking. The tent door stood wide open, and at last Jesus paused in the door and looked out and up to the sky. The night was clear and beautiful, and the starry host was forth in all its splendor.

“The Father,” Jesus said at last, beginning slowly and solemnly, “the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. The Son can do nothing of himself but what he is empowered to do by the Father. The Father may give all power to his Son. If the Son doeth in all things the will of the Father, the Father will show him what his will is and all things that He Himself doeth. By perfect obedience the Son is joined unto the Father in love, and they two are one. And as the Father giveth life to whom He will, even raising up the dead and quickening them, so may He give power to the Son to raise up and quicken whom he will. I love and obey my Father: my Father loves and strengthens me. As my Father gives me commandment, even so I do.”

Jesus still stood in the door of the tent, looking out. The light of the moon, shining full in his face, revealed to his astonished audience its expression of rapt exaltation, and his voice, grown deep and vibrant with passion, thrilled them with a strange sense of supernatural power.

After a pause Jesus went on: “As it was in the days of Noah, so now. They did eat, they drank, they gave

and were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. But first there will be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars; and upon the earth, distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of Heaven shall be shaken: the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give her light, and the stars shall fall from Heaven."

Jesus' tone and manner had become more and more exalted, and now he raised his hands and looked towards the sky, as if the vision of it all were there before his eyes. Pausing a moment, he continued: "And then shall the Son of Man appear in the clouds, sitting upon the throne of his glory, and all the holy angels with him. And every eye shall see him, for as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be. And then will he send forth his Angels to gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend and that do iniquity, and they shall sever the wicked from among the just and cast them into the furnace of fire, where will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

When Jesus ceased speaking, he turned and went back into the tent and sat down, saying at last, solemnly, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Nicodemus and his companions remained for a time motionless, looking straight before them. Then, one after another, they arose and went out without speaking, and Jesus was left alone.

XLIX

PILATE

"Nor let them banish from their city, Fear,
For who 'mong men, uncurbed by Fear is just."
—Æschylus.

It is night. We are in Jerusalem, at the palace of Herod. Here, on an open porch of an upper story, walk back and forth in the dim starlight Pilate and his wife Procula, her arm in his. As they pass an open doorway, where the light of a lamp from within streams out, we may see that Procula is dressed magnificently, in a low-cut gown, and is herself very beautiful. Indeed Pilate, the grim, stern man of war that he was, is still a lover. He married Procula for her beauty, and is yet subject to her spell.

"It would be impossible for me to promise, dear," Pilate is saying. "I stand for the Emperor and Rome, and must do my duty; so go along now, for the Rabbis are coming."

As he spoke, a palanquin, borne by slaves and lighted by a number of torch bearers, paused at the gate by the great tower below, and after brief examination by the officer of the guard there, was passed in towards the palace. Other groups of moving torches could be seen approaching, and Pilate went on: "They will all be here soon now, and I suppose these Hebrew friends of yours would be shocked to meet a woman here." And Pilate, disengaging her arm, turned and taking Procula's coyly averted face between his hands, kissed her on the cheek graciously, and added playfully, "So run along now, pussy."

But Procula still lingered, and placing a hand on Pilate's shoulder, looked him in the eyes and spoke pleadingly.

"But you can promise to give him the benefit of every doubt, and you will, won't you?"

"Oh, yes; that would be no more than Roman justice," answered Pilate. "I can promise that."

"Oh, you *are* my dear, kind lord," and Procula raised her lips to receive a kiss. "I will kiss you for that," she said.

The hard features of Pilate relaxed and the love light came into his steel-gray eyes, as he stooped and kissed the lips that were offered him. "You are a treasure," he said ardently, striving to gain another kiss, but Procula slipped out of his hands, and glided away, laughing her adieu.

Then the Rabbi Gamaliel was announced, and immediately following, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, with several other Rabbis of eminence in Jerusalem, and last of all our old acquaintance Varus, the Roman. Varus is now no longer a field officer of troops, but belongs to the staff of Pilate and is of his household.

When they are all assembled, Pilate addresses them with a stern condescension, so different from his manner of a few minutes ago that we may hardly know him. "I have called you together," he said, "to ask what you know of this man Jesus of Nazareth,—of his aims and objects and following. I ask no advice. I want only facts. To make clear the situation, I should perhaps explain that your High Priest Caiaphas and his faction assert that Jesus claims descent from one of your ancient kings, and that he designs to become himself king of the Jews. They say that he is an artful, intriguing demagogue, and is supported by that old, secret, fanatical party known as the Zealots, who are now, they say, exceedingly numerous, thoroughly organized, and ready for an uprising.

"They assert positively that the coming Feast, which you call the Passover, is set for the time of the outbreak. It is said, further, that you men present are in sympathy

with this movement; you do not need to be told that if there is an uprising, you will be held responsible for your part in it. Now, what have you to say about it? ”

Gamaliel, as being the most noted Rabbi of Jerusalem, was looked to, to make the first answer, which he did by saying that he himself knew very little, only by hearsay. He had had some talk with Jesus, he said, and heard him preach, and though he seemed to be a man of great personal attraction for the ignorant masses, he could see nothing in Jesus but a religious fanatic, whose overwrought enthusiasm and constantly dwelling on one subject had somewhat unsettled his mind. As for any design to be king or to set up any opposition to the government of Rome, he thought it entirely preposterous. There might be, he said, some danger of a fanatical outbreak against the Priesthood and the Temple authorities, and an attempt to introduce reforms that would involve the retirement of Annas and his family from the Highpriesthood; but of anything more than this, he thought there was no danger. Gamaliel begged, however, that no weight be given to his opinion, but would rather refer the matter to Nicodemus and Joseph, who, he said, had given the subject much time and consideration, and were far better informed than himself on all points connected with it.

Whereupon Nicodemus spoke, very much in the same vein as Gamaliel, though with added incident and circumstance to establish what he said. He told Pilate of Jesus' noble and lofty ideas about life, quoted some of Jesus' most remarkable sayings, and told how Jesus lived from day to day.

Pilate was interested, and when Nicodemus paused, he murmured something aside to Varus about Buddhism and the Grecian Philosophers. Then he turned to Nicodemus and inquired if he had seen anything more particularly to prove what Gamaliel had said about Jesus being of unsound mind. Nicodemus rather hesitated at first, and

seemed to evade the question; but finally, on being pressed, told what he had heard Jesus say about the end of the world and his coming in the clouds with angels.

Pilate stared in amazement at these words and asked, "Do you mean to say that this Jesus openly proclaims such notions as that and finds people fools enough to believe him?" Nicodemus answered that it was really so, and Pilate's only comment was, "Humph."

Then he called upon the other Rabbis to state what they knew. Their answers were less guarded than those of Gamaliel and Nicodemus, and Pilate artfully brought out their covert hostility to Annas and Caiaphas and their secret hope that Jesus and his party would humble their pride somewhat.

When all had spoken Pilate dismissed them without much ceremony, and after they were gone, he turned to Varus and said, in a tone of more confidence, "All this favors your ideas of this matter, and very likely you are right; but we cannot go much on probabilities. We must make everything sure. This whole clique that are with Gamaliel and Nicodemus you can see very well are bitter enough at heart against our Annas and Caiaphas. They would all give half they possess,—miserly old curmudgeons as they are,—to see the present Temple authorities driven out. Did you observe how I wormed that out of them? I think I may claim a good deal of a lawyer's acumen in this. Those old sharps didn't mean to let the cat out of the bag; and did you see how annoyed and disgusted Gamaliel and Nicodemus were because they did? These Rabbis are no doubt very learned and keen enough in their way, but like all these untraveled Orientals, they are mere children in business. But no matter. To the point. It is clear to me now what we are to do. I will order up a thousand more of the Gallic Legion from Cæsarea to have them on hand in case of trouble, but we will avoid a clash as much as possible.

“Keep the soldiers out of sight, and you see to it that by no word or sign is any manner of offense given. Don’t let there be any display of images on the Standards, or of anything offensive. These hare-brained Jews, never any of them much better than a lot of lunatics, are sheer crazy on their Feast Days, and, as we know, it takes only a word or a look to set the whole nation to boiling like a nest of hornets stirred up with a pole. But we will let them buzz and boil, as long as they let *us* alone. Of course you understand we must protect Annas and Caiaphas; they and their clique are dependent upon us and are more nearly our friends than any others we have here, and we must not allow anybody or anything to put them out. And that’s all we have to concern ourselves about. Their silly squabble about their religion and their Law, as they term it, we care nothing about. Let them brawl and fight about that as much as they have stomach for. We won’t meddle. I believe that is all; only keep me informed if anything new turns up.”

Varus gave the formal military salute and started to withdraw, but was called back by Pilate. “You haven’t told me lately,” he said, smiling, “how your suit progresses with the fair daughter of Nicodemus. Procula is greatly interested; she is so anxious you should succeed. I suppose it is because misery seeks company,” and Pilate’s grim features relaxed into their broadest smile.

“Well, it is quite a story,” answered Varus, fidgeting with his sword hilt, “and I perhaps should have told you before, though I don’t see that it has any political significance, either. But it is like this. Rachel has been much with her father to attend upon the preaching of this Jesus, and she has become a full convert. She believes that Jesus is a man sent of God to reform the world, and she won’t listen to my suit unless I will listen to her talk about Jesus. She doesn’t intend to marry any man who

is not a friend of Jesus. She doesn't say just that, but that is what it amounts to."

"Well, what's to hinder your being a friend to Jesus?" asked Pilate, with a smile that struck Varus as rather ironical.

"Nothing! I *am* a friend to Jesus," answered Varus, firmly. "I have seen him and heard him, and my admiration for his character and general teaching is very great; but that won't do with Rachel,—she wants everyone to join hands with him and become what she calls a disciple. She urges her father to be one."

"Well, well!" answered Pilate, thoughtfully, "I'd no idea this frenzy had struck so deep as this. I'm glad you told me. Are there many of Rachel's class, do you think, who are like affected?"

"Not of her class, I think," answered Varus, "but there are many good, middle-class women here in Jerusalem who are as devoted as Rachel; and it is one of the peculiarities of the sect that class distinctions are all thrown aside the moment they become disciples; rich and poor, bond and free, are all on the same level: that seems to be the main tenet of their cult. To be a real disciple one has to sell all that he has, and either give all away or put it all into the common fund, so they all have to live alike."

"Strange, isn't it," mused Pilate. "A kind of mixture of Buddhism, Essenism, and the Stoic philosophy. What is the world coming to, anyway! Curious!"

Varus made no answer and again started to withdraw, but was once more called back by Pilate.

"Now you know this is a serious business for me, and I shall have to answer to the Emperor if things go wrong; for if we have to slaughter a few thousand of these vermin, our enemies will take full advantage of it, and I shall be summoned to Rome to show cause. You have spent most of your life in this country,—while I am a stranger here. Of course I depend on you. Now, be sure you are right.

You say this Jesus is not a Zealot, or connected with them in any way. Are you still sure of that? ”

“ I think I am,” answered Varus.

“ Think,” echoed Pilate, sharply. “ Thinking won’t do now. You must *know*.”

“ Well, I *do* know,” answered Varus. “ I will answer for that.”

“ I am thinking more about this clique of Gamaliel and Nicodemus. What you have told me about Nicodemus’ daughter looks suspicious. Isn’t Nicodemus himself a real disciple of this Jesus? ”

“ No. I think it is safe to say that no rich man has yet become a real disciple of Jesus. Without yourself seeing and talking with Jesus, you cannot understand what a mastery he obtains at first over all sorts of men. There is no resisting him. He speaks with the authority of an Emperor, and yet with a kindness and gentleness that marvelously draws all men, and especially women, to him. The sick, the halt, and even the blind, seem to be benefited, and many *are really cured* by the laying on of his hands. Nicodemus and many others of his class have been under the spell of Jesus. At first they are carried away with him in spite of themselves; but when Jesus asks them to sell all that they have and give to the poor, and then again when he goes off into one of his prophetic frenzies and talks about the end of the world and coming in the clouds with angels, and all that, they hesitate and turn back. You can see how it must be,—that is, with the men. The women, as you know, are different; many of them worship Jesus as fervently as our great grandmothers did their Lares and Penates.”

Pilate seemed to be lost in thought, and made no further inquiries.

“ Is that all, your Excellency? ” asked Varus. Pilate waved his hand, and Varus, again saluting, went out.

L

THE PLOT THICKENS

"Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone."—Milton.

The next night there was another meeting in Jerusalem, at the house of Annas. It was in the same place and with the same luxurious surroundings, and the same men, with some others, were present as at the former meeting, already described. Gamaliel alone was not there. Annas, in public the model of reverend gravity and moderation, addressed the meeting with a solemnity apparently so deep and earnest that all present seemed to be moved by it. First, he briefly went over some of the things that had been done to quiet and allay the dangerous state of excitement which he said had been growing in the country since the days of John. He did not tell all that had been done, only what had been attempted openly and within the general knowledge. The secret agents, with unlimited gold and silver from the Temple Treasury, were not spoken of.

"Notwithstanding these efforts of ours," he said, "the excitement grows and spreads. The very existence of our sacred, God-given institutions is threatened, and we, as the trustees and custodians of the Almighty, must answer for their safe-keeping. Boethus here, and Eliab and Alexander, who have been with this Jesus for some time, inform us that his teaching is to the effect that Temples and Synagogues and Priests and Sacrifices are useless and may be entirely put away, and all manner of Government he looks upon as tyranny. It requires no comment to show where such doctrines lead. There are some, as Gamaliel, who oppose harsh measures, saying that if this movement is not of God, it will die out of itself; but this seems to me

a weak evasion of duty. God, the same as man, holds his trusted servants to a strict accountability; he requires them to use every means in their power to protect and defend what He has given into their hands.

“In such a case I believe it to be our duty to use any and every means whatever to preserve the integrity of our institutions as they have been handed down to us by Moses and the Fathers. *The end justifies the means.* The great and holy Rabbi Hillel taught that it was right to cheat the Publicans by any means whatever, and here is a worse evil than the Publicans. In the case of John we succeeded admirably: by like means we may succeed now. As we have not the power of life and death within ourselves, it is necessary to gain Pilate to our side. This we have not yet been able to do.

“Of course he cares nothing for our institutions, and it remains for us to make it appear that this movement, and Jesus especially, is opposed to Rome. There is absolutely no other way, and we must exert ourselves to the utmost on this line. There has already been an attempt to make Jesus King, and we ought to make the most of that. When Jesus arrives in Jerusalem, let our partisans and retainers on all suitable occasions mingle in disguise in the crowd and proclaim him king. This can be reported to the officers of the Roman soldiery and also to Pilate himself. Meantime the charge of blasphemy must be kept in mind, and that may prove our strongest point. By threatening Pilate that he will be reported at Rome, we may force him at least to permit the execution of Jesus for blasphemy.”

When Annas ceased speaking, Caiaphas, as if to explain and confirm what Annas had said, remarked blandly that it was better that one man should perish than that a whole nation should suffer.

When the meeting broke up, the lawyer Alexander, the priest Boethus, and the doctor Simon Kanthera were by a sign detained by Annas for more special instructions.

LI

“AN EXCEEDING HIGH MOUNTAIN”

“Because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear.”—Luke xix-11.

When Jesus on his way to Jerusalem arrived at Jericho, his following had become great in numbers beyond all former experience, and the excitement, fanned into flame by the secret workings of Jacobus and his agents, had reached a pitch of enthusiasm without bounds. Those mercurial Orientals, then as now, were scarcely more reasonable under excitement than a whirlwind or a flame of fire.

The enthusiasm had now communicated itself to the so-called better classes. Rich men and rulers found themselves without thought or volition in the midst of the crowd, shouting and acclaiming like any poor shepherd or vine grubber from the hills. Even Zaccheus, the richest man in the city, a Publican of the higher order and a grave and reverend man, was so carried away that afterward, when the excitement was abated and he and the other rich men had settled back into their old ways, he was facetiously accused of climbing a tree to get a better view of Jesus.

Rachel had now, for the first time, joined herself to Salome, Susanna, and the other women who ministered unto Jesus and his disciples. Here she met Mary of Magdala, and clave to her instantly, upon sight, with a love like that of Jonathan for David. Rachel, with an innocent young girl's freedom from suspicion and evil thoughts, banished all questions of Mary's past, and made no inquiries. These two were drawn towards each other by an all-powerful magnetism that defies criticism,—the affinity of kindred souls. Henceforth Mary had a friend.

All this to Jesus, absorbed as he was in his dreams of an earthly Paradise, direct and simple as a child in pursuit of his Ideal and trustful of those around him, was encouragement quite beyond his hopes. His naturally joyous and sanguine soul leaped almost at a bound from its depths of gloom and foreboding, in which it had been plunged at Hermon, to the happiness and exultation of glad fruition already in sight. His fears were put to flight, and his preaching assumed a tone of boldness and lofty assurance.

He attacked the priests and lawyers and doctors of the Temple cabal with most bitter invective, and gave indications of what he believed was in store by those pointed parables of the Vineyard let out to Husbandmen, of the Barren Fig Tree, and of the Marriage Supper. Those who had so long shown themselves unworthy were to be expelled, yea, cut down and exterminated.

At this time Jacobus and his brothers and Barabbas, for the first time in many years, appeared openly with the crowd. They were disguised as shepherds, but Jacobus with his towering form, and Barabbas, a former citizen of Jerusalem, were so well known that they had little expectation of passing unrecognized. With thousands of devoted Zealots everywhere in the crowd, and all with short swords under their abas, they believed that no one would dare to arrest them. And so it might have been; but Barabbas, so long absent from his home in Jerusalem, where he had wife and children, made bold to visit them, and was seized in his own house and cast into prison.

That servile crowd, which in all corrupt and decadent societies have ever been the willing tool of wealth and office, were receiving their instructions in accordance with the orders of Annas. Disguised as pilgrims, they were to mingle with the crowd and at a given signal to set up a shout, hailing Jesus as King. At the same time Jacobus and his agents were disseminating the knowledge that Jesus was the real Messiah, and asking all men to so hail

him on the morrow. Neither party knew the plans or the workings of the other, and Jesus knew nothing of either. As before mentioned, Jesus had no plans; he simply *lived* from day to day: that was his real message. It was the vital thing about him, that neither men nor devils could destroy,—the thing that *endured*.

All night long pilgrims were arriving from all points east and north,—shaggy shepherds from the roots of Hermon, and not less shaggy herdsmen from Bashan, bands of wild cave and mountain dwellers from Trachonitis and Batanæa, and other thousands of strangely habited men and women from the dispersed among the Gentiles, from Gog and Magog and lands towards the rising sun. The Rabbi Helon of Babylon by trusty messengers had stirred up all the East, and not since the days of the Maccabees had there been such a concourse seen at Jerusalem.

When Jesus arrived at the home of Mary and Martha at Bethany, his clothing, from long camp life in tents, had become much worn and soiled; he himself had grown entirely oblivious of his personal appearance. At this home of wealth and refinement there was opportunity for a bath, and in the morning, when Jesus awoke late from a refreshing sleep, he found his old, worn clothing replaced by fresh, new, beautifully made garments of wool and silk. These clothes gave Jesus a moment of keenest joy and satisfaction; he had no question but that they were fit and due. But then in a moment he had forgotten all about them, and did not so much as remember to thank his hosts for their delicate appreciation of his needs.

After a late breakfast, a skillful hair-dresser was in attendance, and under the adroit management of the friendly Lazarus Jesus submitted to having his mass of wavy hair and beard combed out and oiled, as the diplomatic Lazarus insisted, “in manner becoming to so great an occasion.” Jesus was indifferent: he did not yet realize

how great the occasion was to be, but he had an innate sense of the fitness of being always clean and in order. When, towards noon, Jesus at last appeared before the waiting multitude, his appearance was strikingly beautiful and imposing. Without pride or haughtiness, his bearing was yet that of a king, and he was greeted spontaneously at the very first as the Messiah of God.

Bethany being on the eastern slope of Olivet, Jerusalem is not in sight at that place, and after climbing three thousand feet of rough, stony road in fifteen miles, the way from Jericho still leads steeply up over rocky barrens to the top of the hill, where the scenery changes as if by magic. The western slope of Olivet towards Jerusalem is a garden; olives and fig trees and grapes abound; and here is Gethsemane.

Jesus and his disciples, with the women, started on, as was their custom, on foot. The two miles to Jerusalem could be easily accomplished by noon, and they moved slowly on amid admiring throngs. Meantime, Jacobus and Helon had not been idle. Helon had suggested an artful plan which in its workings assailed Jesus with a temptation greater, perhaps, than any he had yet encountered and, humanly speaking, came near to diverting him fatally from the God-like course he had assayed.

Following the suggestion of the ancient writings,* Helon had procured an ass and foal, and had them at the turn of the road where Jerusalem in all its glory first comes in view. If we take our stand here, we may see for ourselves what follows. In this scene we feel that every minutest detail is memorable, and without effort we note the smallest circumstance. Jesus himself rivets every eye, though he seems unconscious of it. He does not appear so aged as when we last saw him. There are some natures upon whom labors and cares, however great, have no enduring power: they leave no permanent mark. Mid-

* Zechariah ix-9 and Psalms viii-2.

night wrinkles and deep-plowed furrows, lines of pain and thought, smooth out and vanish with returning day. Jesus is one of these: his bared head shows no silver threads and his high, clear brow, no tell-tale lines. He combines the beauty of youth with the majesty of mature and conscious *power*.

Behind him come the disciples, straggling and disorderly but erect and bold. Some, as Peter and Judas Iscariot, are almost haughty in their pride. Their day of recompense,—and may we not say, of vengeance,—is at hand. The Master is now at last to enter into his Kingdom, where they, his faithful, shall sit upon thrones, judging the world. And now follow the women, closely veiled; but we may know beneath any disguise the tall and graceful Magdalene and the stout and lumbering spouse of Zebedee. We look in vain for Rachel. She is not here; but further along we shall see her with her father in the press, her veil blown aside and flinging flowers in the path of Jesus.

When Jesus comes up to where Jerusalem is in full view, he stops and stands for some time gazing upon it, lost to all else. It is a scene grand and magnificent beyond all description. Between us and it, a mile away, stretches the deep gorge of the Kidron, and then the mighty walls of cyclopean stones, built in places, from the very bottom of the gorge up, up, up, four hundred and fifty feet, a wall not equaled elsewhere, nor to be equaled! Part of it is the very wall of David, the warrior king, hoary with a thousand years. Beyond the wall lies the city in awful beauty sitting on her four hills. Zion is there which David sang and all the Holy Prophets lamented; Moriah, where Abraham, in agonizing struggle, gave up his first-born; the Temple, now in the full beams of the noon-day sun, its spires and towers and massive battlements of plated gold aflame; and all its palaces of white marble and precious stones and gold.

Jesus was thinking whence came all this splendor and luxury; he was thinking of his mother and sister and the millions like them, working in sickness and pain, denying themselves the necessities of life, living in huts and hovels, saving, hoarding, that their few pennies might go to build palaces for the proud, the idle, and the vicious, to pay the price of obscene revelry and deck with priceless jewels the robes of harlots. Did the good Father in Heaven so make His world, so deal with His children?

Time was, indeed, when all this was far otherwise, when this Jerusalem was the very city of God, when no uncircumcised dared to pollute its sacred places, when the voice of the Almighty was heard in His Holy Temple and His visible presence seen. To Jesus it is still his Heavenly Father's House. It is made sacred by the prayers and tears of forty generations of his ancestors. It *was* the place of pious love, of praise and prayer. *Now* it is the unclean mart of proud, venal, worldly, time-serving aristocrats, who, the willing tools of a foreign master, beat and oppress the poor, the widow, and the orphan, and who, as the prophet predicted, had made of God's house a den of thieves.

Jesus, thinking of all this, is lost to all about him, and his eyes fill with tears. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!” he murmurs, half audibly, “which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee! How would I gather thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye will not.”

While Jesus is standing gazing at Jerusalem, there is at first a feeling of awe which creeps over the multitude. They see the stern and awful look grow in his face as he gazes on Jerusalem. They see the tears start from his eyes, and see his lips move almost as in prayer, and there is silence. But it is only for a moment.

The signal agreed upon has been given, and the partisans of Annas begin the cry of King. “Behold Israel's

King! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

To Jacobus, Helon, Ehud and the rest, who are gathered close by, this cry is a surprise, and we can see that they are for a moment confused and disconcerted by it. They consult hastily in whispered words, and then the mighty Jacobus, baring his head, shaking out his black mane, and raising his right hand aloft, shouts the old Zealot war cry and motto: "No King but Jehovah. Mi Camochah Baelim Jehovah. Who like thee among the Gods, Jehovah."

The voice of Jacobus, drowning all other sounds, rolls and echoes among the hills like the voice of an archangel. A pause, and then like a flood bursting all limits, ten thousand voices take up the acclaim: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

The feeble, scattering cry of King is heard no more, but the hail to the Messiah, taken up and carried on from mouth to mouth, rolls and swells and rolls and swells down the long slope of Olivet, fills the deep valley of the Kidron, and floats upwards, borne by a million voices, through the gates and over the walls of Jerusalem.

Annas and Caiaphas, sitting on the roof of Annas' palace waiting anxiously for tidings, hear it as the very trump of doom. Pilate, also, with Procula near him, hears it. What doth it portend? A swift messenger from Varus announces, "All is well. The cry of King is swallowed up and lost in that of Messiah." Pilate is satisfied.

To Jesus it is a moment of giddy triumph. He who a few short weeks ago was fleeing for his life as a hunted fox upon the mountains, without where to lay his head, is offered a kingly crown, and what is to him far more and greater, is hailed with universal acclaim the Messiah of God. To him and the disciples in the simplicity of their hearts, this multitude of all nations, languages, and

tongues, embracing perhaps a million souls and stretching away in all directions as far as the eye can see, is verily all the world. Nothing can withstand them: the handful of Romans in Antonia can be swept away like a spider's web.

Surely we may know that now the weakness of human nature is assailing Jesus; the Devil has him on an exceeding high mountain, and is showing him all the kingdoms of the world, for is it not written, “The Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it.”

While Jesus looks around hesitating and doubtful, a stranger approaches him, leading an ass, with a foal following. “This is for thee to ride into thy Kingdom. I was bade give it thee,” says the man, addressing Jesus; then he turns and is lost in the crowd.

While Jesus and the disciples stand wondering, Helon presses forward, and addressing Jesus, says, “It is the Lord's gift. Rememberest thou not the saying of the prophet, ‘Behold, O daughter of Zion, thy king cometh riding upon an ass, with the foal of an ass.’ God himself hath sent thee the ass. Surely thou wilt not refuse so plain a leading.”

Jacobus also comes forward, and with Judas Iscariot and Peter and Simon Zelotes they all add their entreaties, while Jacobus throws his sheep skin coat on the ass's back; and without exercising any volition in the matter, Jesus finds himself mounted on the animal amid renewed plaudits, and receiving, as would appear, the homage of the world.

When Jesus at last raises his eyes and looks around, he beholds a sea of intense Jewish faces, all radiated with hope, expectation, and adoration, and centered in him. Unconsciously yielding to the human instinct, his eyes finally seek among his own, the disciples and the women, the approval for which his heart most yearns. Yes, they,

even more than others, are frantic with enthusiasm. The disciples are spreading their outer garments in his path and tearing down palm and olive branches. The women, to give freer expression to their zeal, have pushed aside their veils and are screaming Hosannas at the top of their voices. One only, Mary of Magdala, is silent. Jesus catches one brief glimpse of her sad, rebuking face as he turns away.

LII

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE

“Why does the Lord have recourse to force when he has hitherto done everything by his word?”—Martin Luther.

Following Jesus closely in the press, we are able to note all that passes. Only a little way from the place where Jesus took the ass we meet a great company of Pilgrims that have come out from Jerusalem. They are of those who, coming from distant parts westward, as Egypt and Italy and Greece, have stopped first in the city or camped in the valley of Hinnom. They are led by Menahem, the brother of Jacobus, and they, adding their Hosannas to those of the multitude around, increase the enthusiasm to a degree that only Orientals ever indulge.

There are hysterical women, and even men, who yell and jabber unintelligible jargon. Some fall into a trance. The sick, the lame, and the blind, screaming frantically, struggle to cast themselves in the way, believing that the very breath or the look of Jesus will heal them. At this point are stationed the Rabbis Boethus, Eliab, and Alexander and others, and near by are another group, among whom are Gamaliel and Joseph, and Nicodemus with Rachel.

As the plaudits ring out louder and louder, Boethus says to the others, rather sarcastically, “You see what all our efforts have amounted to.”

“Yes,” answers Eliab, “the whole world seems to have gone after him. I know not what Annas will try to do next.”

While Eliab is speaking, Gamaliel presses forward and Jesus, noticing him, comes to a halt.

“This exhibition is transcending all bounds,” Gamaliel

says severely. "It is not only unseemly but dangerous. You are inviting a conflict that, if proceeded in, must end in blood and slaughter. You seem to have supreme authority here, and you should at once give orders that this insane uproar should cease."

Jesus, looking sternly,—we may almost say proudly,—upon Gamaliel, answers, "The day of peace and silence is past. I come now not to bring peace, but a sword. If these should be silent, the very stones would immediately cry out."

Gamaliel, with a look of disgust but without more words, turns back, and the procession moves on. At the valley of the Kidron the disciple Philip, who had gone on before, stood waiting for Jesus to come up. With great difficulty he pushed his way in and stood by the side of Andrew. Now, Andrew and Philip were very close friends, and Philip sought Andrew to tell him what seemed to him very important news which the Master should know at once. Andrew, when he heard what it was, agreed with Philip that Jesus should know of it without delay, and so they both, by much effort, got to Jesus' side, and told him that a large company of Greeks had sent word that they were friends of Jesus and desired to see him, that they might know what to do.

Jesus was still more encouraged by this. The Jews, he thought, have all come over to my side; and now the Gentiles seek admission. And so he answered Philip, "Surely the hour is come when the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

This saying Philip and Andrew understood as meaning that the former doctrine of peace and submission, being dead, had now brought forth fruit.

"He that loveth his life," Jesus went on, "shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it

unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him *follow me.*"

When we arrive at the Temple in the midst of the throng assembled to witness Jesus' entry, we find a company of children before the outer gate, all clothed in white, and each with a small banner and a palm leaf in his hands; and when Jesus alights from the ass, they all begin crying, "Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David, the Messiah of God."

Helon, by whom this arrangement has been made, is at hand to apply the omen, and calls Jesus' attention to it by saying, "Thou seest how the prophesies are here again fulfilled in thee this day. As the Psalmist says, 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.'" Jesus makes no answer, but he remembers the passage very well, and it has its effect.

As is usual during the exciting time of Passover-Week, the Temple Guard has been doubled by Caiaphas, and Annas' "Clubmen," with their numbers increased, have received instructions to be exceedingly cautious and give no offense, for the public mind is well known to be in a very excited state. But the new leader of the Clubmen, a gigantic Egyptian and a former gladiator, is anxious to distinguish himself, and this, added to many other causes, will bring about strange happenings.

The situation at this time is more easily imagined than described. The feeling that a great crisis is at hand has now entered into every heart and has possessed all parties. Nothing definite is known: nothing definite is planned. Everywhere is expectation, hope, fear, with a sense of something terrible impending. All is vague and formless, huge, overshadowing, irresistible. The tension in the public mind is becoming painful. The noise and clamor have grown proportionately less, and have at last almost entirely ceased. There is the lull that precedes the tempest. But if the lips are silent, every heart is beating with

an intense hope, or fear, or expectation. Where will it all end!

Pilate and Annas, each sitting apart in his own palace, are gloomy and anxious. Swift secret messengers keep them constantly informed of what is passing, and they issue their orders. Jacobus, as indeed could hardly be otherwise, has been recognized, and Pilate has been notified by Annas, and even importuned to arrest him; but Pilate, depending on information furnished by Varus and knowing full-well that the arrest of the giant leader of the Zealots at this time means instant war and terrible slaughter, holds back wisely, keeping his bloodhounds in leash.

From where we stand, at the western gate of the Temple, we can see the ramparts of the mighty fortress of Antonia, which adjoins and overlooks the Temple on the north, crowded with Roman soldiers in arms. There are ten thousand of these fierce warriors within its gates, eager to be turned loose upon the unarmed multitude. But now they are held rigorously in check and are not allowed to answer by as much as a word to the jeers and imprecations of the throng below, by which they are fiercely assailed. Their vengeance can well sleep for now. It will draw an awful usury. This same Tenth Legion, whose tiger thirst for blood is now restrained, a generation later will here be more than satisfied.

At the moment when Jesus arrived at the Temple, there were few worshipers within: all had turned out to greet the Great Prophet of Nazareth. The few who remained in the Temple, besides the officials, priests, and Levites, were poor wretches, lonely strangers, and mountain dwellers who had scarcely heard of Jesus and knew little of what the uproar was about. Among these few was a woman, bent and wrinkled before her time, who had come up from the mountains of Gibeon with a back load of wood, which she had sold for a few pennies; and fearing that she would

never again be able to come to Jerusalem, she had entered the Temple with the desire to worship and make her peace with God. She was one of the vile Amhaartz who, though a daughter of Jacob, had been brought up with no more knowledge of the laws of the Sanctuary than the superstitious belief that to worship there was an act of saving merit. Without the required gift and although ceremonially unclean, she had penetrated to the Court of the Women, where it was unlawful for her to be.

As Jesus came into the Great Court of the Gentiles, this woman was being expelled from the Court of the Women with force and blows. A portly, red-faced Levite was driving her before him, not sparing the lash that he carried in his hand and crying out to her, "Go, get thy gift! Go, get thy gift!" Jesus immediately went near the woman, whom he at once recognized as the girl who had fallen asleep by Simon's fire long years ago. The woman, who had never forgotten, ran at once to Jesus, and throwing herself on the ground embraced his feet with sobs and tears. Jesus was deeply moved, and "unclean" as the woman was, he took hold of her arm and raised her up. Her rag of a veil was no protection, and across her face and her sunburnt breast big, livid welts, with trickling blood, showed where the lash of the Levite had fallen.

Meanwhile the crowd, following Jesus, has poured into the Temple Court, and as we look around upon those nearest Jesus, we feel that there is something portentous in the number of dark, scowling faces that we know. Jacobus has thrown away his disguising headgear, and stands now boldly confessed by Jesus' side. And around him in close array are his brothers Menahem and Eleazer, Boaz, Ehud, and all that band of mighty men we saw and knew at Og's old cave in Bashan. They bear no visible arms, but to look upon their dark, stern faces, set as in bronze, and then upon the bared brawn of necks and arms

and breasts, is to know and feel that even bare-handed they are terrible.

Jesus himself is apparently oblivious of all this; he has no thought of Jacobus or his band, or of Annas or Pilate, or of any personal hope or fear. The poor, friendless woman, with her bloody scars, fills all his thoughts. A daughter of Israel driven from the altar, not permitted to worship God! Struck, too, like a dog, and by whom!—this bloated Levite, the willing tool of thieves, whoremongers, adulterers!! The look on Jesus' face as he turns to the now cowering Levite is angry and threatening. The Levite turns and tries to shrink away, but his way is barred. The band of Jacobus closes round him like a wall. There is no escape.

And now the cry is raised in the crowd beyond, "Make way! Make way!" and we see a stately man in white, priestly robes, closely followed by the well-known band of Annas' Clubmen, making his way towards us. Yielding as by second nature to the reverence paid to priestly authority, the crowd gives way, and the priest, with his burly guard, is face to face with Jesus and the Zealots. The priest, whom we now recognize as our old acquaintance Boethus, with that fatal obduracy and pride so characteristic of his class in all ages and times, assumes an air of lofty superiority, and haughtily arraigns Jesus for provoking a tumult.

It is the last straw, and for once we see Jesus angry, and almost violent. "Thou whited wall!" he exclaims, "and dost thou accuse me of making trouble? Rememberest thou who accused Elijah of troubling Israel? This place, which was wont to be called the house of prayer, where weary, troubled souls might come and talk to God, thou hast shut up against those who alone can truly pray. Instead, thou hast made of this house of prayer, as the prophet said, 'a den of thieves.' Thou drivest away God's poor with imprecations and a scourge. Ye shut

up not only the Temple against men, but ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against them; for ye neither go in yourselves nor suffer them that are entering to go in.

“Woe unto ye Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Ye are great sticklers for the law, and require every poor widow to tithe mint, anise, and cummin. But what tithe pay ye? The laws which ye make yourselves and call the traditions of the Fathers ye strictly enforce, but the laws that God made for *you*, judgment, mercy, and faith, these ye disregard. Woe unto you, Fools, Blind Guides, Hypocrites, who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Ye compass sea and land to make some rich Greek or Roman a proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you! Ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but inwardly ye are ravening wolves. Ye are whited sepulchers, full of dead men’s bones. Fools, Hypocrites, Serpents, generation of vipers: you deserve and shall not escape the damnation of Hell!”

This tirade, delivered by Jesus with unwonted excitement and violence, is received in breathless silence by the vast throng that surrounds him, and Boethus, though his lips curl with scorn, dares not answer. The very silence is ominous, and even the Clubmen, awed and dismayed by a secret creeping horror, look from one to the other with blanched faces. The whole being of Jesus is evidently moved to its depths, and his appearance, we think, was never so sternly august, so impressive and masterful.

And now raising his right hand aloft and looking up to the gold-decked towers of the Temple beyond, he again breaks forth as upon the slope of Olivet: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! Thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee: how would I gather thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under

her wing, but ye will not; and behold your house shall be left unto you desolate."

Jesus paused, and in looking around meets the blazing eye of Jacobus. There is no word or nod or wink, but in a moment Jacobus has seized the trembling Levite by the shoulder and snatched from him the knotted scourge; this he puts in the hand of Jesus, and cries out fiercely, "Is it not time, O thou Prophet of God, that this Temple of His should be cleansed? Speak thou the word, and it is done!"

Jesus raises the scourge, and bringing it down on the shoulders of the Levite, answers aloud, "*It is time!*"

The scene which follows cannot be fully described. The law forbidding the carrying of arms in the Temple is so far observed by Jacobus and his band that they do not make use of other than those which Nature gave,—and these seem to be entirely sufficient. The old grudge against the Clubmen of Annas, who are armed with clubs, makes them the first storm center, and about them, as the vortex of a whirlpool, the interest for the moment gathers. It would be useless to attempt to describe the general battle. We will take but one instance: that between Jacobus and the Egyptian gladiator. This deserves a more extended notice.

When the Clubmen made their first appearance, Jacobus' eye had marked the burly leader, and when the onset came he sought him out for his own. To do him justice, it must be admitted that the Egyptian seems equally eager to meet Jacobus, and now awaits his attack with raised club and contemptuous eye. With marvelous agility for so large a man, Jacobus dodges the first crushing blow, and before the gladiator can recover Jacobus has grasped with his left hand the wrist that holds the club and wrests the club itself from the gladiator with his right. But disdaining to use any advantage, Jacobus casts the club away and renews the battle without arms. The gladiator, well

knowing that in his training and skill as a boxer lies his chief strength, avoids the closer grapple that Jacobus seeks, and succeeds in planting a terrible blow on the cheek of the Zealot which sends him sprawling on the pavement, with his face and neck deluged with blood.

The gladiator now promptly strives to bring the combat to a finish by falling upon Jacobus while down; but Jacobus is too quick for the slower motions of his antagonist, and is again on his feet before the gladiator can get a full stroke at him. But it is a narrow escape; for as Jacobus springs up, a glancing blow on the shoulder gives him a terrible shaking up, and for a moment it appears as if Jacobus is retreating, defeated. The gladiator, now sure of his victim, with a shout of cruel exultation presses close upon his stunned and bleeding foe.

By this time the duel between these two has swallowed up all other interests, and by mutual consent the hundreds of combatants elsewhere in the great court have made present truce, and every eye rests in breathless suspense on this battle of the giants. By a happy accident, on the first alarm the Temple Guards had closed all the gates, so the crowd within the court was not excessive, and an open space about Jacobus and the gladiator was kept clear. So now, when Jacobus, having got his breath, turns again, that very moment a powerful voice from among the Zealots rings out like a trumpet blast: "Mi Camochah Baelim, Jehovah! Who like thee among the Gods, Jehovah!"

At this there comes a new look on the face of Jacobus; there is a dawning, wild light in his eyes, and almost a smile on his lips. Now again he seeks to grapple with his trained and skillful enemy, avoiding many blows by agility and native instinct, but receiving some body blows that would have killed an ordinary man. And so for some minutes the battle goes on, but now with the gladiator

gradually giving ground. At length he begins to show evident weakness, and keeps on the defensive; his breath comes thick and panting, and the fierce exultation in his face has given place to the grim, sullen despair of the gladiator doomed to die. His pampered life as the henchman of Annas has sapped his strength, and while the abstemious Nazarite seems only to have just awakened to the fullness of his powers, the gladiator is obviously nearly spent.

But now, closely pressed by Jacobus, he snatches a dagger from his breast and before Jacobus can protect himself from this new weapon, has inflicted a wound in Jacobus' side. A yell of execration goes up from the Zealot throng, and many press forward to interfere. But there is no need; for Jacobus only smiles, and in another instant his left hand has grasped the wrist of the gladiator and his right is upon his throat.

The end has come!

The gladiator, jammed back against the wall, with protruding tongue and eyes turned in his head, makes one more convulsive struggle; then the blood gushes from mouth and nostrils, and Jacobus flings him face foremost upon the marble pavement, dead!

What follows is soon told.

The Clubmen, who had already been roughly handled, when they saw the terrible fate of their leader and champion, made no further stand, but turned and fled. Immediately there began that cleansing of the Temple which every Zealot had hoped and prayed for since the time of the Maccabees. No resistance was any more offered, and the thousands of cattle, sheep, and goats held for sale within the Temple enclosure were turned into the street, and all the wooden structures and paraphernalia of the vendors torn down and cleared away. Even those sumptuous and luxurious offices of the Money Changers and Bankers in Solomon's Portico were wrenched away, and

such of their occupants as remained to protect were cast out with more than necessary violence.

Boaz, remembering former insults and blows, sought out that particular banker at whose hands he had suffered many years before, and it may be affirmed that he did not forget usury in making his return.

And so the Temple was cleansed, not with pleadings and soft words but with blows and blood. When, indeed, in this rough world was a great wrong righted by other means? Jesus had dreamed of other means,—a glorious dream, a dream, let us hope, yet on this earth to be realized: but not then or there. His sanguine soul had boldly leaped the boundaries of all experience and embraced the Ideal of all the ages, and if for the moment he seems to have forgotten his heavenly birth and calling, and become again a mere Son of Man, “in all points tempted like as we are,” drawing him, our brother, nearer to us, let us not condemn, but be astonished, rather, that he so quickly and so completely regained mastery of self and recovered his ideal.

Jesus had joy in cleansing the Temple: he had even consented to use force. In the simplicity of his heart he had looked to Jacobus and his fellows, stern religionists as they were, to execute their commission in the spirit in which it was given, severely, but calmly and justly, if not mercifully. And when he saw, with his one word, the old, inveterate Jewish spirit of vengeance leap forth like a flame, demanding its eye for eye and tooth for tooth; when he saw the savage joy of Jacobus in battle, and the horrible, convulsed face of the gladiator cast dead at his feet, his blood spattering his clothes; when he saw how Boaz, with fiendish joy, beat the gray head of the banker on the stones, his heart sickened, and he turned away, thrown again into the wavering balance of Despair.

LIII

FEAR

"Fear is a carrion crow! and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid; our laws are timid; our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over Government and property."—Emerson.

And so the cleansing of the Temple was not complete. When the traffickers, speculators, and bankers had been expelled from the great Court of the Gentiles, Jesus forbade any further violence, and the inner courts, those of the Women, of Israel and of the Priests, with all the absurd and intricate complications of the altar service, were left inviolate.

Jesus and his disciples were stealing away in the dusk of evening, when Jacobus and his compeers came upon them and demanded to know what the plans were for the morrow. Jesus told them plainly that he had no plans, but that he could not countenance any further violence at present. They should wait and leave all to God.

"By faith and prayer," he said, "far greater things than we have in hand have been done. By faith and prayer the sun was stopped in his course, and the sea opened to its depths, the walls of Jericho were thrown down; and our Father Abraham, when he would have offered Isaac, withheld his hand, and behold, a ram in the thicket was given in place of his son."

There were murmurings and black looks from Helon, Ehud, and some others, but Jacobus and his brethren, who, unlike Ehud and Helon, had never been outside of Palestine, were too purely Jews not still to believe in the miraculous and were sufficiently impressed by Jesus' assurances still to be willing to wait.

Later in the night there was a stormy meeting in the secret underground chamber before described, and Jacobus was obliged to exercise his utmost authority to prevent the faction of Helon and Ehud from openly appearing in arms. It was well urged by them that probably never again would there be at hand so large a number of Zealots from all over the world as now. Sufficient arms were at hand to equip an army. The demand, they said, for a great change was universal, and the expectation of it equally so. As for Jesus' leadership, they were more than ever against it. They contended that such vacillation and weakness as he had shown that day was sufficient to condemn him. More strongly and openly than ever they hinted that Jesus was insane, possessed of a Devil.

But these extremists were not sustained. The majority, with Jacobus, still clung to the belief that by some awful and stupendous miracle Jesus would yet vindicate himself. Those strains of mysterious and prophetic utterance about the end of the world, with earthquakes, appearances in the heavens, the stars falling, the sun darkened, and the Son of Man coming in the clouds with Angels and trumpets, had made the same impression on Jacobus and his brethren that it had upon the disciples and thousands of others in Israel. It created a firm belief in them and in all the early Church, and has not been wholly obliterated at the present hour.

Still saturated with the aged and inveterate Jewish superstition that believed in all the stupendous miracles related of the early time, a return to God logically meant to them a return to like manifestations. Jacobus and his brethren and the disciples were not different from those of their countrymen who, a generation later, in hourly expectation of Almighty aid, refused on Sabbath to move a hand in defense of Jerusalem's walls, crumbling beneath the assaults of the Roman army.

At the same time, in the palaces of Annas and of Pilate

there were stir and agitation. Caiaphas and others of their cabal were in a panic of fear, and were ready to give up all for lost; but the more resolute Annas quieted them, and began more systematically to organize defense. Messengers were sent off to various points and were coming and going till far into the night. At last Annas succeeded in exciting serious alarm in Pilate, and swift horsemen were despatched by him after midnight to give orders for the garrisons of various cities to come on to Jerusalem at once. Even Pilate's old enemy, Antipas, at Tiberias, was asked by Pilate to come with all the troops he could muster. As "misery makes strange bed fellows," so in this case a common peril drew these enemies together. Antipas, knowing that a successful revolt at Jerusalem meant his own downfall, responded at once to Pilate's request and came in person to Jerusalem with the soldiers, — with the result that Pilate and Antipas became friends.

At the house of Nicodemus, besides Nicodemus and Joseph, there were few present. Gamaliel was conspicuous by his absence. Alone in his own house, he was congratulating himself that he had never in any way been committed to the support of Jesus, for he saw now, as did Nicodemus and Joseph, that the case was hopeless, and he washed his hands of it. He went calmly to bed, thanking God that he had been so providentially preserved from entangling alliances. At the house of Nicodemus, a nobler and juster feeling prevailed, though equally hopeless. Knowing, as they now did, the disposition and resources of Pilate on the one hand, and the implacable hatred of Annas and his cabal on the other, they saw very clearly that there remained no safety for Jesus but to repeat the action of former occasions and take to flight.

If he persisted in his apparent design of cleansing and changing the whole system of religious observances in the Temple, so boldly begun that day, they realized that there could be only one result possible: with their broader

knowledge and experience of affairs they knew that the mob of Zealots, however numerous and devoted, would only be as sheep for the slaughter before the disciplined, steel-clad legionaries of Rome. On the other hand, if Jesus could be prevailed upon to stop where he was and attempt no further innovation, the case for him, personally, was scarcely better: he had already offended past forgiveness, and his only safety lay in flight.

Such being the conclusion arrived at, a trusty messenger was dispatched to find Jesus and communicate to him what was passing, and to warn him against entering the city again.

LIV

OLIVET

"No instance of the neglect of the Law by Jesus can be established."— Keim.

We must go back a little. When Jesus reached Bethany and began to be entertained at the house of Simon the Leper, for reasons that will readily suggest themselves his women followers were dispersed, and found entertainment where they could. It will be remembered that by the friendliness of Margaloth, the steward of Honorius, Jesus had escaped from the dungeon at Tiberias. For this offense Margaloth had been discharged from service with Honorius, and had afterwards found a place of trust in the household of Annas at Jerusalem.

Mary of Magdala knew of this, and now sought shelter with Margaloth. In the vast palace of Annas, with its hundreds of slaves and servants, it was easy for Margaloth to find place for Mary. She was there on the day when the Temple was cleansed. She knew Jerusalem well, also this palace of Annas, where she had often been with Honorius. Mingling with the crowd about the Temple during and after the cleansing, Mary had heard and seen enough to excite her fears, and she hastened away, first to the house of Nicodemus, where she conferred with Rachel, and then to the house of Annas.

From Rachel she learned that her father despaired of success in the revolution begun that day, for he had been informed by Varus that though Pilate would not interfere so long as the fight was about customs and observances, he thought the change had gone far enough and would tolerate no further innovations. If the movement to expel Caiaphas and the ruling Priesthood should be renewed on

the morrow, it was believed that Pilate would order out the soldiery and there would be boundless massacre, if not war.

At the house of Annas Mary was placed by Margaloth where she could secretly hear what was passing in the inner chamber, where Annas and his satellites were that night assembled. Mary heard here from the mouth of Annas that Pilate had promised to turn out the Legions on the morrow in case of further trouble, and then she hastened away to find Jesus.

Knowing his character and habits so well, she had little difficulty in finding him. She knew that he would be passing the night alone, and probably on the mount of Olives. And there she found him. It was a clear, beautiful night, with the big moon in the east casting its level rays adown the slope of Olivet and making it almost as light as day. The whole scene was one of magical charm and beauty; but Jesus was oblivious of it. He sat under an old olive tree, and around him was all that wealth and skill could do to beautify and adorn. Olivet was a garden. The palm trees' heavy plumes hung dark over winding ways and sylvan bowers. The odor of blossoming grape and orange filled the air, and flowers were growing everywhere. Above, revealed sharply in the moonlight, towered the crest of Olivet, and far below, dark still in shadow, yawned the deep valley of the Kidron; and then, beyond again, arose the mighty wall of David, shining white as snow; and yet more distant and over all, the white and gold of Temple Towers lifted in solemn grandeur towards the stars.

A few steps aside from where Jesus was in the shelter of a rock-hewn wall and revealed clearly in the moonlight, the Twelve lay asleep. Mary had passed them silently as she came along. They were very weary with the day's excitement, and slept care-free and sound. When Mary found Jesus she cast herself at his feet, and remained there silent till Jesus spoke to her.

“What seekest thou?” he said. “Rise up and tell what troubleth thee.”

Then Mary arose to her knees, and told what she had heard, and begged Jesus to have no more to do with the Zealots. “They are indeed brave and true,” she said, “but they are not as thou art; they cannot be: their hearts are hard, and they cannot understand.”

Jesus raised himself and looked tenderly upon Mary, with a love beyond and above that of lover or husband or father or son,—with the love of a *Friend*. Mary, alone of all earthly creatures, divined what was deepest in the heart of the Divine Man. Pure Love is itself a divine thing! And those only who have it can divine. Mary divined. Jesus knew before,—his heart told him,—that what Mary said was true and yet it needed that she should tell him. It confirmed in him a resolution only half formed, and (such is the power of vital sympathy) gave him clearness and strength where before was wavering and almost despair.

Jesus sent Mary away with words of love and blessing that were as balm to her troubled heart; for Jesus did not burden her with the deeper problems that remained yet unsolved. Mary had seen clearly and truly where the one great pivotal truth was. With a woman’s simple straightforwardness, she had understood that the great thing for Jesus to do was to break loose from the Zealots. The difficulties and final results of such an act, with a woman’s characteristic reluctance to consider remoter consequences, she did not at first see, and she went away relieved and almost satisfied.

These difficulties and consequences were left for Jesus to meet and answer as between himself and God. It could not be otherwise. In such struggles there can be no intermediary. The soul of a man, freeing itself from all earthly and earthy garniture and impediments, joins itself

to the free spirit of the Universe: it comes in vital touch with its source, and becomes absolute.

After what had passed that day, after accepting the services of Jacobus and his band, and thus by that acceptance in a marked manner endorsing their action, Jesus, with his noble and just sense of obligation, felt that now to turn his back on them and repudiate their action would appear not only ungrateful but cowardly and contemptible. Jacobus had been his friend and most devoted admirer almost from childhood; he had now freely risked his life in a most perilous adventure for him and in his cause. Moreover, to Jesus, who had no comprehension of the prodigious power of Rome, it seemed certain that a revolution could be accomplished by force and arms. Surely these patriots, burning with zeal for the Law and liberty, whose wild Hosannas still rang in his ears, would make short work of the Roman soldiers shut up in Antonia. And with them destroyed and Annas and Caiaphas put away,—surely the Kingdom of God was at the door!

And not only were the Zealots and nearly all of this vast throng of Pilgrims who were in and about Jerusalem looking for him to lead forward on the morrow and finish the work so well begun, but his own chosen twelve and the women (except Mary Magdalene) would, as he knew, be filled with disgust and disappointment if he should refuse.

Again, Jesus knew that he had already given mortal offense to the hierarchical power in Jerusalem, from whom no forgiveness was possible, and that his death alone would satisfy them. It was clearly far safer for him personally to say nothing of the glory and the advancement of his cause and Kingdom, to press forward, than to pause or turn back.

If he went forward, he had the support, so it seemed, of millions of zealous patriots and fellow-countrymen. If he held back, he was sure to be left alone and defenseless against the cruel mercies of enemies whose very religion

was vengeance. But through and over all, Jesus remembered as a frightful dream the little image of war he had that day seen in the Temple,— the agonized, contorted face of the dying gladiator, the horrible, bloody visage of the gray-haired banker crushed upon the stones: and then more distant in memory but still vivid as of yesterday, that other awful scene of slaughter at the cave of Og. These scenes of blood and vengeance were graven on his mind and heart as with a stylus of fire; he could not put them away; he could not condone or excuse them. God, the Father of all, did not so intend for this beautiful world and for His children.

Thinking of these things, with first one side prevailing and then the other, and with a prayer like a sob ever in his heart, Jesus passes the night. He does not notice when the stars and the moon begin to fade and the light of day to steal over the hill. All around him is movement. Far and near the millions of Israel, encamped in the open and in Jerusalem itself, are up, listening and watching for the call to worship from the watchman on the Temple Pinnacle. The air is clear; there is no breath of wind, no cloud. Far away southward the arid hills of Hebron rise in sharp outline in the growing light, and now, like a tongue of flame, the polished gold of the Temple Pinnacle flashes back the first beams of the rising sun. Then wafted across the still dark valley of the Kidron, sounds faint with distance the stentor voice of the watchman, followed by three blasts of the silver trumpet, calling Israel to prayer.

And now the disciples are astir, and Jesus, recalled to himself, arises to his feet and attempts to walk. He staggers and almost falls. He is stiff and chilled to the bone. The night has been cold, for it is April. The disciples, shamefaced and silent, gather around, and at length they all join in the morning prayer.

LV

SUSPENSE

“Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered.”
—Math. xxi-18.

In the excited state of the public mind, eager not only to see and hear but to communicate, news flew as if on the wings of the wind. It was already everywhere known that Jesus had arrested the overthrow in the Temple, and the rumor had gone out that without force or arms a great change would shortly be effected by Heaven-sent miracles and prodigies, such as were witnessed in the olden time. What and how was only conjectured, as was also the question whether the new state was to be a Kingdom or a return to the Patriarchal condition. Some said one thing and some another, and all was confusion, with impatient waiting and expectation.

At an early hour the Temple and its environs were packed with solid masses of people waiting and looking for some stupendous manifestation of power. If we join the throng about the Temple gate and listen but for a moment, we shall get the drift of the common thought.

“No,” one is answering to the question of another, “the Master has not been seen since last night at set of sun. Some say that he has been taken up as was Elijah, which may well be, for he is to appear in the clouds with Angels and trumpets and lightnings, and if he appears in the clouds he must first go up.”

This proposition, duly weighed by the attentive listeners, was accepted as self-evident, and all eyes were turned towards the sky. In the east were some light, fleecy clouds that the sun had not yet dissipated, and one remarked, “Those clouds in the east seem to me very different from

ordinary. See how they do not move in any particular direction, but seem to swell and curl as if they meant something."

And now all eyes watch the clouds till they shortly begin to fade away and disappear; and then, drawing a deep breath after the long suspense, another speaker says, "'Tis said that a raven or a buzzard or some such foul bird lit on the Temple Tower yesternight, where no bird ever lit before * and fouled the gold of the pinnacle. Didst hear about it?"

All the listeners are anxious to be told more about the ominous bird, but the relater of the rumor can give no details. Another, in the crowd, however, gives the additional information that the bird cried, "Woe, Woe, Woe!" and flew away to the Dead Sea.

"And that may well be," answers another, "for the Master has said that this Temple, built by the heathenish tyrant, Herod, will be destroyed, and that he will build a better one, clean and pure and holy, and do it all in three days."

"Aye, and it is the only way, I doubt," answers another, who by his garb may be known as a Pilgrim from Babylonia. "It is now as in the days of Moses and Aaron; and these false priests and lawyers and doctors and thieving money-changers are as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The earth will open and a fire from the Lord consume them."

"Amen and Amen," answer a dozen voices among the listeners.

All eyes are now turned to the Babylonian, whose manners and appearance show him to be a man of some consequence; and the first speaker addresses him: "By thy speech and dress thou art one of the dispersed. May I ask of thee how this time is regarded beyond Euphrates?"

* The Temple roof was protected by sharp points to prevent birds from alighting on it.

"As is thy heart here, so is our heart: we are one people," answers the Babylonian gravely.

"And do you look for the Messiah, as do we?" continues the first speaker.

"Much the same, no doubt," answers the stranger, and then he goes on: "It is nearly forty years now since the star of the Messiah appeared in the east, and many of our Rabbis thought then that he would immediately appear; but now, after deeper study of the Scriptures, they say that when the star appeared, then was the Messiah born into the world as the Son of Man spoken of by the prophet Daniel; born of a virgin, and near to Bethlehem. This Son of Man, they say, must now be, as this Jesus, about forty years old. But the Messiah of the Scripture is to be a warrior king, a true son of David, who will destroy all enemies and restore the Kingdom to Israel, while this Jesus, they say, is not of Bethlehem at all but of Nazareth, and is a carpenter's son, knowing nothing of war."

Meanwhile Jesus and the disciples, having spent the night on Olivet, were on their way to Jerusalem. In the excitement and exaltation of the last few days, when the disciples were in daily expectation that the Kingdom of God would immediately appear, they had naturally fallen into great disorder as a community. Jesus himself had been profuse in giving to the poor and the bag of Judas had become entirely empty. Separation from the women had also a bad, disintegrating effect. Not only were they cut off from the contributions of the rich Joanna and Susanna, but they suffered from the lack of those softening and humanizing influences and womanly attentions that belong to the household and to domestic habits.

This morning found the little company, after a night of exposure and hardship, hungry, cold, and miserable. There was no food, nor water at hand for washing. There was grumbling and fault-finding and even quarreling. Judas was accused by John of improvidence and carelessness,

which brought out an angry retort from Judas, who accused John of luxury and idleness.

Jesus, absorbed in his own thoughts, did not at first notice, but finally, when the voices had grown very loud, with some oaths and other offensive words, he called them to order, and with a manner so sad and sorrowful that they were put to shame. Jesus himself was faint with hunger, and seeing an old fig tree by the roadside, he went to it hoping that, as often happens, some poor, dried up remains of last year's crop might be found upon it. But there was nothing, and Jesus, in a very human way, yielded to his misery and spoke of the barren fig tree with such marked irritation and impatience that the disciples were astonished, even shocked by it. Some years later one of the disciples, passing that way, noticed that the old fig tree was dead, and he remembered how Jesus had, as he said, "cursed it."

When Jesus arrived at the Temple, he was respectfully received by the waiting throng, and a way opened for him and the disciples to enter; but there was no demonstration as on the first day. Everyone was waiting: the whole attitude of the public mind, of all men and all parties, may be expressed by the one word *suspense*. Jesus' enormous personal influence and power, as shown on the first day, and on that day felt and observed by all, was the chief element and the unknown quantity, in the equation, which it was believed was this day to be solved.

What would Jesus do? was the question upon which all hung. With all their control of the national resources and the assurance that Pilate with all his soldiery would protect them in possession, the cabal of Annas was still fearful, and to avoid all manner of offense they had made no attempt to restore the business of the Great Court. Everything was left as it was when Jesus withdrew, and not a soldier or a Temple Guard was in sight. The sacrifices on the Great Altar and all the formalities of the inner courts

were proceeded with as usual. There was no interference with Jesus' speaking to the multitude. As on other occasions and without entering the more sacred precincts, he sat the whole day in the Royal Porch, as was his wont, answering questions and telling stories.

Many of the doctors and lawyers and priests about Jerusalem had disdained ever to go out into the country to see and hear Jesus, and so had never seen him. Now that he had risen to such importance in affairs and was attracting so much attention, they thought it worth while to condescend enough to go and see him. They were mostly of that class of men we call "smart," not outwardly so haughty and supercilious, but more of the cast of the demagogue, ready of speech, keen, witty, familiar, possessing much superficial learning, and fond of debate. They thought to make short work of this home-spun prophet of despised Nazareth.

And so they came upon him, one group after another, with their artful law-riddles and critical canons, to go away not only silenced and overthrown but mystified and perplexed. For, after showing such mastery of himself and his subject, as is so manifest in his answers about the tax to Cæsar, the woman who was wife to seven brethren, and the woman taken in adultery, he would go off into mysterious discourse about the Father and himself being one, of how those who followed him and kept his words should not die, of how Abraham had rejoiced to see his day, and how he could lay down his life and take it again at pleasure. Such discourse, to the worldly-minded Rabbis, was no more than the insane maunderings of a lunatic, and to the listening multitude was mysterious and prophetic utterance not intended to be easily understood.

By mid-afternoon of this day Annas and Caiaphas began to breathe more freely, and at night, when Jesus went quietly away with his disciples, they were jubilant: the crisis, they believed, had passed.

In the early morning, a legion of Roman soldiers had marched in past the Temple to Antonia, and Annas had instructed his secret emissaries to spread abroad the story that a great army was at hand to repel further attacks. He believed that Jesus was now overawed and in fear; and with the sagacity and promptness of a military leader, he resolved to push his advantage at once and to the utmost. He knew well that to make a victory complete the repulse must be followed instantly by the charge and pursuit.

All that night there was the sound of saws and hammers and busy workmen calling to each other in the Temple Porticos, and by morning the solid structures which Jacobus and his band had demolished were replaced by temporary wooden arrangements that would suffice for the present occasion, and could be replaced at leisure by even more costly and elaborate structures than those destroyed. The herds of sheep and oxen and goats were brought back, and doves in sufficient numbers were again exposed for sale in great cages and hampers. The money-changers or bankers, with their pyramids of shining gold displayed on tables, were back in their old stands.

LVI

A FALLING BAROMETER

"The multitude indeed, disappointed by seeing no signs of the national movement they had expected that day to inaugurate, had lost their enthusiasm and in many cases grown even hostile."—Geikie.

And so the next morning, the second after the cleansing, when the people assembled at the Temple and saw what had been done in the night, and observed at the Temple entrance huge placards announcing that the price of all animals and doves had been advanced to a higher figure than before, they were not slow to adopt conclusions that were very damaging to the prestige of Jesus.

The effect was like a cold rain in summer; and when Jesus, arriving late from far-off Bethany, came up to the Temple, though the way was opened up for him and silent respect shown, his sensitive soul felt and recorded the change in public feeling with the scientific accuracy of a true barometer. The simple disciples, still looking for the world-moving miracle, saw nothing, and Jesus did not disturb their restful trust by telling them his fears. Even to the last, only in obscure and mysterious hints which they did not understand, did he speak to them of the end, which to him began this day to appear more certain and near.

But Jesus did not now falter or flinch. He resumed his teaching in the Temple Portico as usual, and performed one of the miracles recorded of him. The story of this miracle, handed down to us from that ancient time, is as follows.

In Jerusalem, near the Temple, was a pool of water which for a long time had been held sacred, because at certain times an angel from God came down and made a commotion in the waters of the pool, which was to indicate

to those who saw it that the waters were at that moment, by the angel's touch, imbued with a mysterious and supernatural quality and power of healing, so that he who first stepped into the pool at the time of the stirring by the angel was cured of whatever sickness or infirmity he might have. This remedial quality or power communicated to the waters by the angel was so limited in its amount and scope that it sufficed but for one person at a time, so that, though there was at all times "a great multitude" of sick and infirm people anxiously waiting and watching about the pool, only one of the whole number could possibly expect to get any relief, and all the rest had to wait for that uncertain time when the angel should find it convenient to visit the pool again.

Now Jesus in his walks about the Temple came upon this pool, where in their rags and filth lay "a great multitude of impotent folk," waiting for the angel to come and stir the waters. They apparently had not heard the report that Jesus healed by his word all who were brought to him, and had lately at a place two miles away raised one from the grave, for they gave no heed to Jesus when he appeared among them, and he was obliged to make the first advances towards making their acquaintance.

But seeing one sturdy beggar who had lain about the Temple precincts and the pool for, it was said, thirty-eight years, Jesus approached and questioned him. What Jesus, with his faculty of seeing into the hearts of men, may have concluded about this man, we can only conjecture by what he said to him. With kingly dignity and that tone of authority, which was so marked in Jesus, he bade the man to take up his poor pallet of straw and other belongings and go away. The man without a word of dissent obeyed, and when some time after Jesus met the man walking about in the Temple, he spoke to him warningly, and told him to beware and sin no more or a worse thing would come on him.

This solitary instance of healing by Jesus at this time is somewhat remarkable, for by no account does it appear that of all the multitude of impotent folk, poor, homeless wretches, waiting and watching long years about the pool, Jesus healed other than this one.

So the day passed, and at night Jesus and the disciples, finding no accommodation in the city and wishing not to overburden the friends at Bethany, retired to spend the night again on Olivet. The suspense and doubt of the previous day had not wholly subsided in the public mind, and at night there were again meetings and discussions.

At the palace of Annas, where the chief rulers of Jerusalem are assembled, exultation is still much tempered with fear, and the arrest of Jesus, now the great question of the hour, is hotly debated. There is much speaking for and against, some affirming that Jesus' influence is steadily on the increase and that if he is arrested now Pilate will be *forced*, even if against his will, to sustain the party of law and order. This view is opposed by Annas, who declares that though of course the arrest of Jesus must now be the one aim and object, the time, he says, is not yet ripe. They must still further undermine and destroy Jesus' influence with the people before they can safely proceed to extremities. The arrest of Jesus now, he thinks, would be certain to cause an insurrection, which would offend Pilate.

At the old palace of Herod, Pilate, far into the small hours, is in deep consultation with Varus and others, receiving and sending dispatches and striving to comprehend the vagaries of this strange people he has been called to rule. Annas is still plying him with fearsome accounts of bloodthirsty Zealots and artful Herodians who intend to make Jesus King, and he has authentic accounts from Varus that Jacobus himself was one of the band who made such an unaccountable attack upon the Temple officials. Procula has explained to him the party differences, and Varus assures him that *he* still feels sure that neither Jesus nor

the party of Nicodemus has any intention of employing force; but still Pilate is suspicious and anxious and only half satisfied.

At the house of Nicodemus there is still anxiety and fear. Gamaliel is there, and Joseph and others. Nicodemus, comprehending the situation better than any other, is still far from clear as to methods or results. He is a man of peace, hating war almost as much as Jesus, and he knows well that in the state of the public mind as it has been this day, any slight accident of word or deed may precipitate a most terrible conflict. With three millions of Jews in and about Jerusalem, mostly fanatics, wild with dreams of a restored Kingdom and Messianic glories, he feels that nothing but the guiding hand of God can bring them safely through. Jesus alone he still thinks might avert disaster by withdrawing from the city. But this he has refused to do, with a result such as no man can yet know.

Long after midnight, when Nicodemus is at last alone, Rachel comes to him with an account of what Mary of Magdala has just told her, that Jesus has gone away, as she thinks, to Bethany, to spend the night with some old friends of his family. There is a gleam of hope in this,—possibly Jesus will not come again to Jerusalem. About this Mary has expressed doubt; she could not tell. She was on her way to the house of Annas to learn what she could there of Margaloth. And Rachel tells her father how the faithful Mary, with labors and journeyings and midnight watchings, is growing thin and wasted. More and more, Rachel loves Mary, thinking nothing of her past.

The meeting of the Zealots this night is even more stormy than the one of the night before. The party of Helon and Ehud declare that they will have nothing more to do with Jesus in any event. Helon, with fervid eloquence and masterly logic, shows how Jesus is a failure, and can no more be looked upon as the Messiah. And Ehud, in a violent, passionate speech, declares that by adhering to

this "wizard" and waiting for him to lead, they have already lost the supreme moment, the one great opportunity of their lives. Had they pressed forward on the first day, he says, regardless of Jesus' command to desist, success was then assured. All the people were with them; but now, he says, there is hesitation, doubt, uncertainty everywhere. The people have looked all day for miracles and they have got only sermons and riddles that they do not understand, and meantime Pilate is filling Jerusalem with soldiers from everywhere. Even Jesus' own disciples, Ehud declares, are sick and disgusted with Jesus' uncertain and vacillating policy. He has talked with some of them this day, he says, and found them extremely dissatisfied. One at least, he asserts, would come over to them at any time they would act independently.

Jacobus, still enthralled by the personal influence of Jesus and by his inborn, ineradicable faith in the miraculous, refuses to change, and from this moment begins that split in the party of the Zealots which a generation later is to cause the insane sacrifice of thousands of precious lives and lose forever to the children of Abraham their Nation, their land, and their City of God. This meeting of the Zealots broke up in angry dispute, with nothing concluded or determined upon.

LVII

MARY AND HELON

"God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please: you can never have both."—Emerson.

Days and nights have passed, and the day of the feast of the Passover is near at hand. To the common eye, there appears but little change in and about Jerusalem. Jesus has continued to teach daily in the Temple, arguing with and refuting the Rabbis and teaching the people. That high, exalted, and somewhat haughty manner into which Jesus was betrayed on the first day he has wholly laid aside, and again he has become the gentle, loving teacher and friend of the old days of Galilee and the lake shore. He still employs his old method of telling stories to attract the people's attention and enlist their sympathies; but beneath it all, as of old, is the one Great Theme,—the Law of Love, the Law of Love!

The excitement among the people has largely subsided, and it is so reported to Annas and to Pilate. The Zealots, now at almost deadly feud among themselves, have ceased to be the great and imminent peril that they were, though the extent of their disagreement is unknown either to Annas or Pilate, and *they* still live with the fear of these implacable and fearless sectaries ever before their eyes.

Pilate, through the pleadings of Procula and the advice of Varus, has given the final "no" to the importunities of Annas to arrest Jesus, thus throwing the responsibility of such an act wholly upon the Jewish rulers and making it easy for him to escape whatever odium may attach to such a lawless proceeding.

Meanwhile, the true character of the woman Mary of Magdala begins at this time of trial more plainly to ap-

pear. Except by the women, who still hold her aloof, Mary had come to be held in highest regard. Her own exemplary conduct, together with Jesus' manifest respect for her, had placed her high in the estimation of all. Even the artful Rabbi Helon sought her out as the most powerful intermediary to influence Jesus. He had little faith in Jesus, and would gladly have discarded him altogether; but this he found it impossible to do, and so he still sought to *use* him.

Helon had made diligent inquiries about Mary and had become acquainted with her past, and thought he could use her for his purposes. He represented to her how easy it would be for Jesus to become, if not King, at least the head and leader of Israel, and what a glorious future was open before him. He would not even need to fight at all himself: in that he could adhere rigidly to his principles; he would only have to lend his name to the Great Cause; he could be a second Moses. Then Helon artfully suggested how she, Mary herself, would profit by such a course. Instead of being the servant of servants, homeless, wandering, and despised, as the beloved of the King she could sit on a throne and take vengeance on all of her enemies. It was forbidden for a Rabbi to speak to a woman, even his own wife, in a public place, and Helon had found means to meet with Mary at night in the garden of Gethsemane.

Mary was not disturbed, but answered the Rabbi calmly, though sadly. "I fear thou dost not know Jesus, O Rabbi Helon. It seems strange, and yet I suppose it is God's will, as Jesus says, 'that seeing, they might not see, and hearing, they might not understand.' The disciples are all so; they, too, are looking for a Kingdom with riches and honors and thrones, and only to-day they were quarreling about who should be greatest. But thou, a Master in Israel, shouldst be able to see and to understand. I pray thee, go as a little child and sit at Jesus' feet, and thou wilt no more seek to buy him or me with baubles."

Mary said no more, and the Rabbi, gathering his cloak about him, went his way astonished. And Mary, in the deep shadow of palm branches, sat still and waited. After a time there was a step on the paved walk and the tall form of Jesus was before her. Mary cast herself at Jesus' feet without a word and remained silent. Jesus raised her up and made her sit down, while he himself stood and looked sadly upon her. "Thou art troubled about something. What is it?" he asked kindly.

And then Mary went on and told how, by the help of Margaloth, she had heard with her own ears the final decision of Annas and his cabal to arrest Jesus, and how they designed to manage to have him crucified. She produced new evidence of the defection of Judas, and told of the attempts that were being made to draw away Peter and others. She told how the cabal were still afraid to arrest Jesus in the daytime and among the people, for they still feared that Jacobus and the Zealots would provoke an uprising if it was done openly; and so they would be seeking him at night, and even *that* night. Mary besought Jesus to go away from Jerusalem at once. Annas, she said, would not pursue him into Galilee, and there he would be safe.

Jesus listened silently to all that Mary had to say, and then with a sigh he sat down on a stone seat opposite to Mary. After a long silence he began speaking. "It is, perhaps, the last time," he said, "that we can speak together in this way, and it is your due that I should tell you while I may that neither my eyes nor my heart are shut to what you have done and are doing. I know, too, that more than others your heart is open to the truth. It has pleased God to hide the truth from the wise and prudent and to reveal it unto babes. Who loveth much, the same also seeth, heareth, and knoweth much. The heart made pure with love safely pervades not only Heaven, but Hell."

Jesus paused, and in the silence they could hear the tramp of a body of men not far away. Then by the glare of torches carried by servants dressed in the livery of the High Priest, they could see approaching a considerable number of men, some of the Temple Guard armed with swords, and some of the Clubmen armed with stout staves. They were without discipline or efficient leadership, and were prating indiscreetly as they came straggling along. From their talk it was apparent to Jesus and Mary that they were in search of Jesus; but their efforts to find him were evidently very perfunctory, and Jesus and Mary, who were sitting somewhat aside in a little bypath, were not seen. When they had passed along Jesus resumed.

“It is no longer meet that I should flee away. So long as I am with them, this people will still look for a King. As sayeth the prophet, ‘God hath blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes nor understand with their heart and be converted, and I should heal them.’ *No prophet hath been believed till God took him away.* Even so must it be now. The law of sacrifice was from the beginning. The blood of Abel’s lamb was accepted of God, and Moses required the firstlings of the flock. These things, because of the hardness of men’s hearts, God winked at; but now old things are passed away and all things are become new. The old bottles will not hold the new wine. Till now men have sacrificed of their flocks and herds and first fruits; now they must sacrifice *themselves*, and *he is nearest God who gives most of himself*. He who gives his life gives all.”

Jesus paused. Beneath them in the deep gorge of the Kidron, where thousands of Pilgrims were encamped, there were moving lights, and the murmur of the great throng came swelling up at intervals, then sank and sank and died away. Beyond, the innumerable lights of the Great City flashed and gleamed, and dim against the starry sky the Temple Towers were visible. On this side, up on Olivet

towards Bethany, the moving torches of the Temple Guard were yet in sight, but the murmur of the Guard had died away; then no sound was heard but the faint splash of the fountain near by among the palms.

Suddenly from a tree overhead a nightingale began its sad, sweet song. Jesus did not consciously hear, but Mary bowed her head upon her knees, and when the bird had ceased, her repressed sobs broke the silence like a cry of pain. Jesus was startled by it, and arising to his feet, he approached Mary, and putting his hand on her bent head, said tenderly, "Weep not, but count it all gain that thou art found worthy to suffer."

Mary, with a sudden movement, caught Jesus' hand to her lips and bathed it with her tears. Jesus withdrew his hand slowly, and with a solemn benediction went away into the night, leaving Mary alone.

LVIII

BETHANY

"In the Gospel accounts there are such remarkable divergencies in detail, some of which seem to imply a different standpoint from which the same truth is viewed."—Edersheim.

The next night there was a great supper at the house of Simon the leper. Jesus himself had at this time a standing invitation to make this his home when in Bethany, but he generally preferred to spend the night alone or with his disciples, who were not invited to Bethany. Jesus, after the days of labor and excitement in Jerusalem, felt the need of being alone, and his life-long nomadic habits made it comparatively easy for him to spend his nights in the open air.

But the sisters of Simon, Mary and Martha, on hearing of the homeless condition of the disciples and not realizing that these rude fishermen were used to a rough life, thought that they must do something to make this festive season a little pleasanter for them, and so they told Jesus to bring all of his disciples to take supper with them. Mary and Martha had a reputation for hospitality and entertainment. Their supper was a banquet where nothing was spared that would make it pleasingly memorable to their guests. Imitating the luxury that then prevailed in Jerusalem, they had great variety of meats and pastry, and of drinks there were offered in extremely small goblets wines of various vintages, even iced wine from Lebanon, spiced wine, and wine with myrrh and absinthe, also beer from Babylon, barley wine from Egypt, and native apple-cider; but there was no drunkenness.

The worst offense of the disciples was a total ignorance and disregard of etiquette and a rudeness of behavior that

was quite shocking to Mary and Martha; but Simon, with the tact of an accomplished gentleman, passed all off with rare pleasantry and good humor. The disciples, to whom such an entertainment was heretofore unknown, were charmed and flattered by it, and enjoyed it immensely. Jesus alone knew of the danger that threatened him, and he would not mar the occasion by intruding his personal sorrows or fears. Though he ate and drank with extreme moderation, he joined in all with a beautiful courtesy and a hearty comraderie that Simon, polished gentleman as he was, was amazed and delighted by it.

Towards the end of the feast, when the after-dinner wine had been brought in, there appeared a tall, strange woman in the banquet room. She had come in through an unguarded back passage, and went straight to Jesus. Though closely veiled, with her eyes only visible, her presence and bearing were dignified and commanding, and instantly the babble of voices and the noisy clatter of dishes ceased. Jesus looked at the woman steadfastly, while his face changed from grave to sad, the saddest that might be seen in this sad world; but he did not speak. The woman, disengaging from a heavy gold chain about her neck a small, beautifully designed flask of alabaster, broke off the neck and poured the contents on Jesus' head. The ointment was the famous "Indian Nard," very costly and so fragrant that the odor of it filled the room and all about with a penetrating but delicate perfume.

After emptying the flask, the woman cast herself at Jesus' feet, which were bare, and as her tears (for she was weeping) fell upon his feet, with a single swift movement she loosened the great mass of her hair, which then fell about Jesus' feet and with that the woman wiped off her tears. Jesus did not speak to the woman or interfere with what she did. After a time she got up, and as silently as she had entered, left the room and disappeared.

Mary of Magdala was too singular in appearance and

too well known not to be recognized both by Mary and Martha, who were shocked and even scandalized by such an outlandish proceeding. But both they and Simon were too well-bred to make any comment on the incident and immediately tried to divert attention to other things, but the dissatisfaction of the disciples could not be altogether repressed. They all knew it was Mary, and they knew that the costly nard must have been long in her possession,—probably a gift from Honorius in the old, sinful days; in their present poverty they felt that she should have sold it, and turned in the price to the common fund. Judas especially, upon whom fell the labor and care of providing and whose bag had of late been for the most part empty, was more than the others outspoken, and made complaint to Jesus that such waste should not, in their present state of need, have been tolerated. This was not the first evidence that Jesus had had of the dissatisfaction of Judas.

He had long known that Judas, with his ultra-Jewish prejudices and leanings towards the Zealots, was becoming more and more detached from his cause and more and more disposed to factious faultfinding. The jealous solicitude of Mary had long marked his growing disloyalty, and both she and John had warned Jesus of the danger of trusting him.

On this occasion many of the other disciples besides Judas were displeased, and seeing that Mary and Martha were disapproving, they made bold to express themselves. But Jesus mildly reproved them, and without giving very clear reasons, justified Mary. He knew that her anointing was with reference to his death and burial, though he did not say so. Mary did not hope to be able to meet him again after he was arrested and that, she knew, might take place that night or at any time. Jesus' gentle and manly spirit would not permit him to pain his hosts or his disciples with any allusion to such a gloomy and sorrowful theme, and it was only afterwards that they connected Mary's anointing with the final catastrophe.

LIX

JUDAS

"This betrayal of the Master is so unexpected, so incredible, so horrible; it so alarmingly threatens not only belief in all human fidelity, but also in the dignity and greatness of Jesus, that some have attempted to prove that the betrayal by Judas was a fiction of Christian fancy."—Keim.

Through his spies Annas had early learned that there was some falling off among the disciples and that Judas, more than the others, was growing dissatisfied. Annas took pains to search out the character, lineage, and native place of Judas, so as to know how best to approach him. He found that Judas, alone of all the twelve, was of Judea, and came of a family noted under the elder Maccabees for bigoted zeal for the Law. With this cue, Annas, by his agents, had plied Judas with artful arguments, to show that Jesus, so far from being a restorer, was really a destroyer, of Moses and the Law. Of course there was much to support this theory, and the wedge of doubt once entered, Judas from day to day saw more and more to convince him that Jesus was a rank innovator, if not an impostor.

To add to this estranging influence, Helon and Ehud had also found means to approach Judas, and they now told him that the Zealots as a whole had decided that Jesus was only an artful adventurer and thaumaturgist, and was no more worthy to be followed than Simon Magus or any other conjuror. At the time, these arguments had seemed to have little effect on Judas, but they proved to be seeds planted in a rich soil, which sprang up, like Jonah's gourd, flourished for a day, and were cut down.

Then, too, Judas had begun to have personal grievances. John had accused him of misappropriating the

funds intrusted to him, and even of being a thief. Judas had complained to Jesus about this, but Jesus had only good-naturedly told him a story and put him off. Judas was of a hot, choleric temper, not open and ingenuous like Peter, but dark, moody, and vengeful. At the supper at Bethany, in addition to the offensive affair of the anointing, he had received fresh affronts from John, which Jesus had not rebuked. Judas, making the excuse of urgent business, withdrew at an early hour, filled with disgust and resentment, and bent his steps towards Jerusalem.

As he walked on, reflecting upon all the incidents and events of the past, he felt so confirmed in his rebellion against Jesus that he wondered in himself why he had been so long deceived. He went over the past, and everything now seemed so plain. What a fool he had been! He had seen the august dignity and splendor of the Jerusalem hierarchy in possession of all the symbols of the ancient religion, surrounded by the magnificence of wealth and power and pride, and maintained by all the strength of Rome; and now to think that Jesus, with a few boorish fishermen from despised Galilee, should overthrow all this without visible means and set themselves on thrones, judging the world. How preposterous! Besides, Jesus himself had commanded them to observe and do what the rulers at Jerusalem commanded. "They are in Moses' seat," he had said.

Then such a fiasco as that of the cleansing of the Temple! Clearly Jesus was a failure! He no longer performed any miracles; he did nothing as promised for his friends; and he weakly refused to smite his enemies when he had a chance, and was now deserted by the people and by the Zealots themselves. He was without resources. There was scarcely money enough left in the bag to buy the Pass-over Lamb, and many of the disciples needed new coats for the festival. And Judas looked at his own soiled and ragged gaberdine and frowned grimly.

“And yet we are thinking and talking of sitting on thrones, and quarreling about who shall have the highest place. And that beardless boy John, who is always nagging me about something and whom the Master seems to love so much; he thinks *he* is to have first place and lord it over the rest of us. Bah!” And Judas made an impatient gesture, and walked on more rapidly; but soon he moderated his pace, and finally, as he came down to the bottom of the Kidron, he stopped and sat down on a seat by the roadside. “And yet here am I, too, still thinking of that same thing! Sitting on one of those twelve thrones, and fearing lest John should have a higher one. What do I really believe about it, anyway, and what does it all mean! Wonderful, what a power that man has over people! I should think I was a fool, if I were the only one; but when such men as Joseph and Nicodemus and others like them are drawn away, I need not think that I am altogether a fool.”

It was an awful tangle, and Judas sat for some time confused and undecided. “If it were not for that John,” he resumed at length, “I could go on a while yet; for Jesus himself is certainly a good man. He really seems to be sinless, perfect, and one cannot help but love him when he is with him. And then if it should finally turn out that he is really the Messiah, and should come, as he says, with Angels and with power, what would become of me if I betray him! The rest of them still believe it all, and why shouldn’t I?”

Judas got up and walked slowly on into the city till he came to the Temple. Its magnificence had never appeared to him so august and imposing. To impress the innumerable company of pilgrims that now thronged Jerusalem, the great structure was brilliantly lighted from base to pinnacle. An almost full moon added its bewitching light, and the white and gold of the great towers flashed and gleamed almost like noonday. From within, the

mighty sound of the great organ, which was said to be heard at Jericho, mingled with the blast of horns and trumpets, and accompanied by a choir of a thousand voices, made the whole air to tremble and vibrate with an effect that was overpowering.

Judas paused a moment and listened. It needed no more. Judas was awed, convinced, determined; he no longer doubted where his duty lay. Pushing his way through the crowd about the Temple, with firm, rapid step he crossed the great bridge over the Tyrophean and made his way straight to the palace of Annas. The nightly meeting of the cabal at this place had not yet broken up, and when it was learned who it was that asked an audience, the lawyer Alexander and Boethus were sent down to talk with Judas at the postern.

Matters were soon arranged. Judas told the Rabbis that he had become convinced that Jesus was an impostor, and he said he would conduct, any night thereafter, a party of guards to arrest him privately and without danger from the people.

When this news was communicated to Annas, with characteristic promptness he ordered that the thing be done *at once, that night*. To this Judas at first acceded, then hesitated and drew back. He said he didn't know where Jesus then was, or where he would spend the night. Finally, he demanded assurance that Jesus should be dealt with fairly and justly, and that nothing should be attempted against him contrary to Moses and the Law. To this the Rabbis replied truthfully that no *Jewish* tribunal could sentence to death and that as the Romans had refused to interfere, there was no danger of extreme measures. Then they offered him a large sum to go at once. But Judas could not be moved, and the arrest was put off indefinitely, Judas only promising that he would come and let them know when there was a favorable opportunity.

The Rabbis by all this were very unfavorably impressed. Their sharpened faculties discerned clearly enough that Judas was not fully determined, and they reported to Annas that it was a very doubtful case.

"The man's reason is convinced," said Boethus, "but when it comes to the point, he cannot tear himself loose from the snare in which that wizard Jesus traps all men of a certain class who come near him. There are Rabbis Joseph and Nicodemus, men of knowledge and experience, who know full well that this Jesus is a vain fellow, and yet there is a magnetism, a personal attraction, about the man that holds them spellbound, and they stand about as this man Judas. They don't believe, and yet they worship."

Judas went away cursing himself for a fool, and torn with conflicting feelings and emotions that gave him neither sleep nor rest. In the meantime a thousand other influences were at work. When Judas came out from the house of Simon at Bethany, Mary was still waiting without, and saw in the glare of the lamps Judas' angry face and impatient gesture as he, unseeing, passed her on his way to Jerusalem. Filled with vague alarm, Mary followed Judas, and though she lost him in the crowd about the Temple, she divined that his goal was the palace of Annas; and there she finally went, to find that Judas had come and gone.

But Margaloth, true to his old love for Jesus, had been able to overhear much that had passed, and he told Mary that Judas had agreed to lead a party of guards to arrest Jesus at the first opportunity. This information Mary communicated to Jesus the next morning.

LX

WAITING

“And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.”—Luke xxii-8.

The day following the supper at Bethany was the Preparation Day of the Great Feast. It was Thursday, the fourteenth of April. Jesus and his disciples, except Judas, had spent the night, as usual, on Olivet—Jesus for the most part in prayer and anxious thought, so that the morning found him weak, depressed, nerveless. He was too worn to go to Jerusalem and meet the carping questionings of the lawyers and doctors, and teach the people as on other days. He felt that the great crisis was near, and he must husband his strength to meet it manfully.

Towards noon Judas came and saluted Jesus as usual, but Jesus had just been told by Mary of the certainty of Judas' treachery, and he could not altogether repress or conceal the aversion which this intelligence had produced. He received Judas' kiss without giving any in return, and searched him with such a cold, scrutinizing glance that Judas felt chilled and repelled. Could it be that Jesus suspected him?

Judas had come back more than half repentant, and if Mary had not told and Jesus had not known, may it not be that the story of Judas would have been different? If, possibly, the story of Judas, not, surely, the final catastrophe! As it was, Jesus could not but feel distrust of Judas, and he ordered him to turn over what he had in his bag to Peter and John, whom he commissioned to go into the city and buy a lamb, and provide for their eating the Passover.

This taking away from him his authority as provider and bestowing it upon the youthful John was still another

affront to Judas, and was evidence sufficient of Jesus' suspicion and estrangement. Still, Judas submitted with apparent cheerfulness and good-will; he was resolved to wait at least till after the Passover, for it had occurred to him that perhaps that particular day and hour, the natal day of the Nation, the time when God wrought such wonders in Egypt, had been chosen for the promised revolution, when the earth should be rent, the stars fall, and the angels appear in the clouds of Heaven. He could wait at least one more day.

All that day Jesus sat in a secluded spot on the slope of Olivet, where Jerusalem was in full view, and with his face in his hands he gazed in silence hour after hour. He refused all food and spoke only to repeated questionings. The two Jameses and John were especially anxious to have the women, at least their mothers, who were present in Jerusalem, eat the Passover with them. Jesus and the disciples made only thirteen, and twenty might lawfully eat together. John, upon his return from Jerusalem, reported that he had seen the women, and they had asked to be admitted. But Jesus, when asked about it by John, refused to have them. This refusal seemed very strange and ungracious to the disciples, and they had not the sensibility to divine the real reason.

Jesus would gladly have had the faithful women present, but he remembered that Mary of Magdala, not having made the required sacrifice at the Temple since her breaking off with Honorius, could not lawfully partake of the Passover. He knew that the other women would feel affronted if Mary was present, and to invite the others, leaving her out, was not to be thought of. Jesus would not permit it.

LXI

THE LAST SUPPER

"The peculiar hatred which is manifested towards Judas in the gospel attributed to John confirms this hypothesis."—Renan.

When the little company of thirteen were at last assembled in the upper room, in an obscure back street in Jerusalem, Jesus at first succeeded in throwing off the appearance of dejection and forced himself to resume his old, genial cheerfulness and sociability. The simple, child-like desire to make those about him happy was inherent; woven as a cloth into the very texture of his being, it may be said, that this was a part of his religion. Jesus was so constituted that he could not be happy unless those about him were so, too. He had labored incessantly to teach this doctrine to his disciples, and tried to have them see that giving up self and doing for others was the very spirit of the Kingdom of God.

We may imagine how discouraging it was for him now, in this solemn hour which he had set upon to fix and seal this covenant of sacrifice to find the old, worldly spirit of ambition and jealousy again noisily rampant. *The disciples, even the beloved John, were quarreling about their places at the Passover Table.* To the gentle heart of Jesus, it was like a stab in the house of his friends! It was almost too much. Jesus felt that his ministry was ended, and that he could do no more. If then these, his chosen twelve, had profited so little by his life and teaching, what could he expect of the world at large? What had it all amounted to, anyway? What good had he done? Who was there that truly understood him and accepted him, for what he was? Some wanted to worship him as a god, and others reviled and condemned him as a

devil. Who, indeed, approached to a just conception of him, but one, and that, alas! a woman.

By such thoughts, awakened by the quarreling of the disciples, Jesus was crushed and in despair. He did not speak, but sank down on a couch and covered his face with his hands. The disciples, conscience-smitten, stood about with downcast eyes. At length, on a hint from Peter, John approached the Master and asked timidly what it was that troubled him.

Jesus sat up, and looking around upon the disciples, said, "After my being with you so long, you are still, like men of the world, quarreling about places at table."

Jesus said no more, and the disciples began shamefacedly to take lower places at table, and Peter, impetuous and extreme in this as in everything else, at once took the lowest and least honorable position, which was opposite and nearest to Jesus and John. Judas, who appeared stolidly indifferent, neither seeking nor refusing, was left to take the place of honor next to Jesus. And to John, being the youngest, by mutual consent was left the place at Jesus' right, where he could whisper in his ear and lean upon his breast. This loving intimacy between Jesus and his disciples had grown to such a degree that they now saluted each other with a kiss, and leaned upon one another's breasts like school-boys.

Jesus now, to give an example of how they should feel towards one another, took a basin and towel and washed the disciples' feet, none of them objecting except Peter, whose fine, true gentlemanliness revolted at such extreme and apparently needless condescension. But Jesus, feeling that perhaps this was his last night with his disciples, desired to make the occasion not only memorable, but, without consciously abrogating the old, to introduce some new symbolism that would characterize and express the one great Idea of the New Kingdom, *Brotherhood*.

But much as Jesus desired to make this occasion one of

pleasure and even of jollity, he found it impossible to make it other than one of dejection and sorrowful foreboding. As the Master of all, the gloom of his own spirit overshadowed and imparted itself to all. His utter weariness of body and mind, added to so many other discouragements, overcame his natural desire, and he appeared before his disciples sad, dejected, even melancholy.

He did not state clearly to the disciples what he feared, nor give reasons; but as was common with him, he spoke vaguely of going away, of being separated from them. Few of the disciples paid much attention to this gloomy and discouraging talk. They had heard much of the same thing often before, and they attached little weight or meaning to it. They were like children who shut their eyes and tremble at mention of spooks and hobgoblins, but press forward with eager interest, to hear about Cinderella and Prince Charming. They remembered and believed about the twelve thrones and the glories of the New Kingdom, but they refused to entertain any thought of the fiery path that led them to it. No doubt Jesus' manner of dealing with this subject was largely the cause of the disciples' hazy unenlightenment. He did not speak out plainly, because, for one thing, he did not himself know. As with all such gifted souls, he vibrated between exaltation and despair. To the latest hour of his life he was in doubt.

The disciples had heard him speak often, with a glowing enthusiasm that thrilled their souls, of angel hosts that were at his command; and at one time he had said that if he needed protection, God would send him whole legions of angels, and the disciples believed it. Why, then, should they trouble about what the Temple authorities, with a handful of undisciplined guards, could do to them? Two or three of the disciples, of a more inquiring mind than the others, were incited by Jesus' obscure hints and despondent talk to ask some questions, and Thomas

and again Peter, begged to know where Jesus was going, as he said, and the way to get there.

Jesus answered Thomas, saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also, and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."

Philip, who also was of the questioning ones, astonished at this answer, now interposed and asked Jesus to *show* them the Father, and they would be satisfied.

Jesus answered: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou, then, 'Show us the Father.'"

The disciples, who were all listening, were more than ever mystified; but each supposing that perhaps all the others understood and that he himself was prevented only by dullness and stupidity, they asked no more questions. The supper was eaten very leisurely, with much conversation and at length one mentioned casually that he had heard in Jerusalem that day that the Temple Guard had been out the night before in search of some one on Olivet.

"Strange," he added, "that none of us saw them, for we were there all night."

"Yes, and so were the stones in the wall," said Peter, "and the stones were not more dead asleep than were you fellows. I saw the lights of the Guard and heard them pass, but didn't consider that it concerned us."

Jesus was listening, and his brow darkened. "They were looking for me," he said, "and there is one of you who will tell them where I am. One of you will betray me."

This sentence, spoken quite sternly, brought everything to a standstill. No one spoke or partook of food. The disciples looked from one to the other with wondering,

inquiring glances, till all eyes were fixed on Judas, on whose dark, stubborn, aquiline face alone appeared an effort to remain unmoved and indifferent. But Judas was not a good actor, and though he tried to appear unconcerned, his grim, set face and black eyes rolling and glowering beneath his heavy brows, were very noticeable. He saw at once that suspicion had fastened upon him, and his first feeling was of indignation and a sense of injustice. He had done nothing: he had even declined a great bribe, and *refused* to betray Jesus. He had flattered himself that he had acted quite virtuously,—and now to be treated this way!

At length Peter, who was nearest across the table, asked Jesus who it was that should betray him, and asked if it was *he* whom Jesus suspected. All the disciples, including Judas, then asked Jesus the same question. But Jesus refused to point out the man, only saying that it was one of those who dipped his hand in the dish. Of course all did this, for they all ate out of a common dish, each one taking out a portion with his bare fingers. At last Peter, unsatisfied with such an equivocal answer, motioned to John to persist in the inquiry.

John, little loath, and leaning on Jesus' bosom, now stretched up to Jesus' ear, and holding his hand between Jesus' ear and Judas, asked again in a whisper that Jesus would just whisper it to him alone, who it was. Jesus looked down into the beautiful, confiding face of the youth, and for a moment his eye lightened and across the deep sadness of his countenance there was the fleeting gleam of a smile. He stooped his head and whispered in John's ear, "He to whom I will give a sop is he," and Jesus immediately gave the sop he had then in his hand to Judas, who sat next to him; and then immediately reaching across the table he gave the next to Peter, and so on around till he had given a sop to every one.

No one had heard, not even Judas, what whispered words had passed between Jesus and John; but when Jesus gave the sop to Judas, John, simple and artless as a child, stared at Judas with such wide-eyed, open distrust and aversion as to leave no doubt in the mind of Judas, already keenly suspicious, that Jesus had named him to John as the traitor.

In fact, Jesus' design was quite the contrary. On such occasions it was a law, established by long usage, for the Master of the feast to give a sop, composed of small portions of the lamb, the bread and some bitter herbs. This he took in his fingers, dipped it in the great bowl or dish containing the lamb, and gave to each guest, beginning with the most honored. In this case, Jesus, knowing the struggle and the temptation of poor Judas, and with a heart that could sympathize even with him in his dark ignorance and superstition, had designed only to mystify John, while at the same time, by presenting the sop first to Judas, to reassure *him* with this mark of confidence and good-will, and if possible reclaim him from the evil course he had begun. This plan would no doubt have worked as designed, had John been less a boy and with riper discretion and greater self-restraint refrained from so plain an exhibition of his enmity and distrust.

Judas, with his suspicions already aroused, saw in the whispering of John and Jesus, followed by the sop and, more than all, by the hateful stare of John, enough to confirm his worst fears, and he instantly resolved to proceed in the execution of his half-formed design. Jesus saw and marked the miscarriage of his scheme, and at the first opportunity spoke again kindly to Judas, but now without avail; it was too late. Nothing now could convince Judas but that his correspondence with the Chief Priests was known to Jesus and to John, and taking the first opportunity he slipped out and went away.

What Jesus' last words to Judas actually were, the dis-

ciples never knew. What Jesus said was this: "Think! Wait! Act not too quickly."

The departure of Judas was scarcely noticed by the simple and care-free disciples: they had no fears. But to Jesus the significance of Judas' going was clear, and certain; he saw the danger and began to prepare for the worst. He knew that the disciples, still obdurately bent on worldly honors, disliked his preaching; but he knew also, what faithful fathers and mothers and teachers of all times have learned, that line upon line and precept upon precept is the good seed. He knew that though it might fall upon ears that were deaf and unwilling now, the day would come when recollection would invest his words with importance, even with glory. And so, weary and spent, though he was, Jesus continued to talk to his disciples till far into the night. He told them that the enmity of the Priestly Rulers and their power was such that there was no knowing what might befall at any time.

"And if anything should happen to me," he said, "be sure that, first and above all, you remember to practice the law of Love. Love not only one another, but all the world. Go out into the world and teach by your example that all men are children of God, all brethren of one Father. Remember, too, what I have often told you, that old things are about to pass away and all things to become new. When John and I lived in the desert, we mended our clothes, and sometimes had to use bits of new cloth to patch an old garment; but the new piece always tore away from the old, and the rent was made worse. We must have new bottles for the new wine.

"Some changes are necessary, and there must be something to distinguish between the old and the new. John taught that all must be baptized with water, and the idea is good. Baptism has been practiced among the Jews time out of mind. Wash one another's feet when ye come together. And if I must die and leave you, remember

always this last supper we have had together. Now, before we go out, let us eat and drink what remains of the bread and wine, in remembrance of it."

And Jesus took what remained of the bread and of the wine, and after asking a blessing upon it, continued, "If anything should happen to me, so I should die in this cause, remember that this pure, unleavened bread you may liken to my body, and this good, red wine to my blood: it will help to keep alive the truths that I have taught you."

And Jesus broke the bread and gave it around, and poured what remained of the wine and gave it to the disciples, telling them they might as well drink the whole of it; for he himself would promise them that he would drink no more wine till he drank it new in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus talked a long time with the disciples, some of the time very plainly about their duties and future labors; and then again he would go off into a strain of parable and mystery that the disciples could not understand. At last Jesus, seeing that they were grown very sleepy and dull, ceased speaking, saying that if they would sing one good old hymn with him, such a one as they had all learned when little children at their mother's knee, then they would go.

And so they sang one of those old home hymns, and as they sang, the disciples all noticed that Jesus wept.

LXII

WATCH AND PRAY

“The disciples did not suspect the nearness of danger.”—Keim.

When Jesus and the disciples came out from supper and started for Olivet, it was a silent and gloomy company. The night air was cold and damp; an April shower had fallen while they were at supper, and though the disciples were all young men and used to a rough life, they could not but think how much better off were the greater part even of foreign pilgrims than themselves.

Jerusalem itself was packed with pilgrims who found shelter at least at night; and when they came down to the valley of the Kidron, the multitude there encamped for the most part had tents. And there were fires, the sight of which made some of the disciples almost homesick, thinking of far-away Galilee and the fishing fires by the lake shore.

Peter and Philip, who had left wives and children, and were drawn together in mutual sympathy, walked behind, and in low tones talked sadly of home. At length lured on by similar confidences, Philip told Peter that unless something more definite turned up to bring about the Kingdom of God, he believed he would go home, for a while at least. His family, he said, needed him, and besides, to tell the truth, this Kingdom of God began to appear to him a very doubtful affair anyway. And Thomas and Simon Zelotes, Philip told Peter, were of the same mind, and would go home with him after Sabbath was passed.

Peter admitted that the case was now a pretty hard one, and said he would like to go home, too; but he urged Philip to hold on for a while yet. “There is still,” he said, “the seven days Feast of Unleavened Bread, and

much may happen in that time. Let us trust the Master yet."

On the bridge crossing the Kidron the whole company paused a moment to look and listen. The narrow, rocky gorge was now filled with a rushing, roaring torrent, swollen to unwonted size by the spring rains; and the big moon, high overhead, shining fitfully through broken, hurrying clouds, showed at times the black waters, flecked with foam, rushing away towards the dread salt sea. Each weary traveller was occupied with his own sad thoughts, and so they moved on in silence towards Olivet. Presently, however, Jesus, still dwelling on what Mary had told him and on the absence of Judas, spoke again of the danger that threatened.

"The Chief Priests and Scribes and Pharisees," he said, "no longer fear the people as they did, and there is no knowing what they may do. The people have been offended because I forbade them to fight and to shed blood, and I fear that you disciples are growing lukewarm. You are discouraged and murmuring. Because the coming of the Kingdom is delayed, you, too, have lost faith and are about ready to give up and go away backwards. Remember, as I have told you before, he that endureth to the end is he who will receive the reward,—the throne and the crown."

Jesus' words showed such discouragement, and his whole tone and manner were so sad and depressed, that they struck a chill to the hearts of the disciples. Most of them felt the truth of the words, and would hardly have been able to make any answer except for Peter, whose sympathies were aroused by Jesus' extreme sadness, and he spoke out at once, assuring Jesus that if the people had deserted him, and all the world besides, it would make no difference with him. After the habitually exaggerated manner of the Orient, he added, "Though I had to die for it, still would I not forsake thee."

The other disciples, with such an example before them, could hardly do less, and they repeated the sentiments expressed by Peter. For the moment Jesus was pleased and comforted by these expressions of faithfulness; but he shortly reverted to his sad broodings.

“I know,” he said, “that you all mean what you say. You think you would bear up, but no man really knows what he can do till he is tried. I cannot blame you much, for, poor souls, you have been sorely tried; but I would not be surprised if you all denied me before the cock crows to-morrow morning. And Peter here, with his hot temper and wild imaginings,—the Devil gets into him sometimes, as he did into Job, to sift him as wheat, to remove the tares and the rubbish, and leave at last only the clean, pure seed grain. And so God maketh the Devil himself to do Him service; and so whatever happens is in the end all well. But remember this: if aught happens at any time to scatter and disperse us, our meeting place will be Galilee.”

By this they had come up to a little olive yard, inclosed by a wall, where were oil presses and some rude sheds for storage of the fruit and oil. The disciples besought Jesus that they might turn in here, where the sheds offered some shelter from the cold and the rain which now again threatened. Jesus gave consent, and the disciples began at once, like disbanded soldiers, to look for sheltered places to sleep. But Jesus recalled them a moment and said, “My soul is exceedingly troubled and sorrowful, so that it seems as if I might die, and I cannot sleep; can not some of you sit up and watch with me?”

They were all very tired and sleepy, and Jesus’ fears appeared to them wholly groundless and absurd; but Peter, to prove that the Master’s doubt of his faithfulness was unjust, at once volunteered to sit up and watch. James and John, not to be outdone by Peter, said they would watch.

“It were better for you all,” said Jesus, solemnly, “if

you could watch, instead of sleeping, and pray lest ye be tempted and fall into the Devil's snare."

But while he was yet speaking, some of the disciples had crept away into the sheds and were searching about for good places to sleep. Turning then to Peter and James and John, Jesus told them that he would leave them to watch, while he went a little way aside to pray. When he was gone, it began to rain again, and the three disciples drew back within the shelter of projecting roof and sat down. They soon began to feel the chill of the damp and cold night air, and drawing their cloaks about them, shivered and remembered longingly sunny Galilee.

The rain soon ceased, as suddenly as it had begun, and the moon shone out an instant clear and bright. By its light the three disciples could see Jesus a little way off, kneeling on the bare rock and praying. At intervals, when the wind sank low, they could hear words, and they gathered from what they heard that Jesus was praying to be saved from some dreadful calamity; but they thought that he was only having one of his fits of despondency, and they were not impressed. In fact, their watching was of very short duration, for they, like the other disciples, were soon asleep.

LXIII

PERFECTED

"'Tis midnight; and on Olive's brow
The star is dimmed that lately shone.
'Tis midnight in the garden now;
The suffering Savior prays alone."—Tappan.

When Judas came out from the Passover Supper, he thought he saw the figure of a woman glide into a narrow alley close by. In his excited state his suspicions were easily aroused, and he hastened to explore the alley to see if there really was a woman there. But he found nothing, and hastened on to the palace of Annas. As soon as he was gone, a tall female figure emerged from the alley, and keeping as much in the shadow as possible, followed after Judas, until she saw him enter the palace of Annas. Then she turned and fled. There were few people on the street, and the woman ran at first with all her might towards the eastern gate of the city. Soon becoming exhausted, she was obliged to moderate her pace, but still walked swiftly on. Passing out of the city, she was presently threading her way among the scattered tents and bivouacked thousands of the Kidron valley. Turning here northwards, she soon left all these behind, and at last, through a scene of utter barrenness and desolation, over broken rocks, fissures, and chasms, approached an old, abandoned quarry, now one of the secret resorts of the Zealots. And here she found them, Jacobus, with his brothers, and Helon and the rest.

Boaz and Ehud, marked men since the affair of the aqueduct, having rashly separated themselves, and entered the city, had that day been seized by the Romans and cast into prison. That, with other matters, had kindled the

long smouldering spark of rebellion against Jacobus into a flame. The faction of Helon and Ehud had already gained largely among the people, and even among the sworn Zealots. Jacobus' friendship for Jesus and his attitude of still waiting for him to proclaim himself openly was now derided by Helon, and regarded generally with disapproval. It was now more fiercely than ever demanded by Helon and his abettors that Jesus should no longer be considered, and that they should proceed at once with some plan for the expulsion of the house of Annas and the Romans.

When Mary arrived at the quarry the debate was at its height and had grown into an angry quarrel, in which Jacobus' lofty and magnanimous forbearance alone prevented bloodshed. Mary was shocked and pained; in the simplicity of her desire to save Jesus' life, she had grasped like one drowning at any straw, but her eyes were now opened as never before. She was more than ever confirmed in her former intuition that there was no real help for Jesus in these warring factions. She saw how supremely wise Jesus had been in rejecting their assistance. She could not go away, however, without informing Jacobus of the danger which threatened Jesus; but her heart misgave her, and she went away discouraged and sick at heart.

Then the thought of Rachel came as a ray of hope. She had not told Rachel of the new danger. She would go there. Rachel proved sympathetic and promised to do what she could, but she could offer little encouragement. She told Mary that her father and Joseph and others had defended Jesus to the limit of safety, till they themselves were in danger and had been threatened. They dared not do more. Rachel, in telling it, wept, and in parting from Mary in the darkness, she fell upon her neck and held her long in passionate embrace.

And was there, then, no help from God or man? Was the Heaven brass and the earth given up to Satan? In

the wild heart of the daughter of Deborah, as she stumbled on blindly in the darkness, there were rebellious thoughts and fierce thrills of the inveterate spirit of war and vengeance, such as stirred her ancestress of old to go down with the armies of Barak. Might not the Lord again sell Sisera into the hands of a woman? And Mary felt for the dagger, a gift from Honorius, which she had never laid aside. Could not she strike that to the heart of the cruel and impious Annas? A hot flush ran through her frame, and she grasped the steel with a firm, strong hand. Yes! She was equal to that! She could do it!

She was passing the palace of Simon Kanthera, "The Quarrelsome." A lamp with a shade hanging over the portal cast a bright light over a little space about the door, and Mary, in the shadow on the opposite side of the street, could see sitting on the stone bench by the side of the door a blind old beggar. He was chanting in a low, sad monotone to the sound of an old battered harp. The incident was not so unusual as to demand particular attention, and Mary would have passed unheeding, but for something in the words or the tone or the old harp,—she did not at first know what,—that arrested her, and she paused in the shadow and listened.

It was of the old, old theme that the man was singing,—the Messiah of God, who would preach good tidings unto the meek, bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to captives, open the eyes of the blind, return good for evil, and whose law was *Love*. At the moment there was no one passing on the street, and Mary went across very softly and approached the blind man quite closely without his hearing her; but by that mysterious sixth sense, so often largely developed in the blind, the old man became aware that someone was near, and ceasing to play and to sing, raised his face so the lamp shone full upon it and put out his hand for alms.

It was a venerable face, with strong Jewish features.

The man wore no covering for his head, and his hair and beard were long and white as snow. Mary saw and knew! It was her father, whom she had supposed dead. And then the earth and the Heavens began to spin around her and the lamp to dance; she clutched at the iron gate of the palace, and dug her fingers into the granite wall, staining it with blood, but she did not fall. And then the burly porter came out, and with oaths and blows drove the blind man away, and cursed Mary, calling her a harlot, while the great wolf-hound chained within the gate roared and tugged at his chain.

Mary, recovering herself, took the old man by the hand and led him away. And as they went, the Rabbi Gamaliel, in his palanquin, with slaves and torch-bearers, and greeted with salaams, turned into the palace of Kanthera. A half hour later, Mary, having safely bestowed her father with Margaloth, was hurrying eastward again towards Olivet. As before, in her eager haste she at first ran; then, becoming tired, she went more slowly, and finally, when she had passed the valley of the Kidron and began climbing the steep of Olivet, she came to walk very slowly. At last, as if hesitating and in doubt, she sat down on a stone bench by the wayside and buried her face in her hands. For some time she sat thus without moving; then, slipping softly down like a mass of snow from a bending branch, she lay with outspread hands and with her face in the dust. She did not sigh or groan or utter any cry, but lay for a long time silent and motionless. At length she arose to her knees, and raising her face towards the sky, she prayed: "Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

When Mary had finished this prayer, she took the dagger that she had long carried from its concealment in her dress, and inserting its blade in a crevice of rock, snapped and flung the thing, jeweled hilt and all, away. Then, with firm, swift step, she resumed her journey up the steep side of Olivet.

LXIV

GETHSEMANE

"Whether a man approaches death with or without sighing, the chief point is that he dies for the sake of principle."—Keim.

When Jesus left the disciples with the charge to watch, and went away himself to pray alone, his whole being was in the whirling eddies of despair and doubt. Though in the very prime of manly power, the limit of his endurance had been nearly reached. For several days and nights he had not slept, and the strain of meeting the people and the great Rabbis in the Temple Court, in addition to his secret cares and questionings, had brought him to a pass where relief or death was the only alternative. Jesus realized this.

For whole hours his brain seemed on fire, and his thoughts became wild and tumultuous,— huge, monstrous, unutterable,— when he felt dimly that he was losing himself, losing faith, losing hope: in short, losing God! His life seemed an utter failure. It had been all a horrible mistake. He was not the Messiah. There *was* no Messiah. Those Rabbis were right who said the age of the Messiah has passed. God had forsaken His people. Or, more likely, his mother and brethren and sisters, Uncle Zebedee and Uncle Clopas, were right, who adhered to the good old ways and trusted still that God would send the good King Messiah, when it pleased him to do so.

Then what were all these visions of an earthly Paradise and a human Brotherhood, of the Fatherhood of God and the coming of the Holy Angels to cleanse and purify the world? What but the cunning devices of Satan, to draw him away, to make false prophecies, as the Devil had often done to the prophets of old?

Or was it even as the Sadducees and the Roman and

Greek philosophers taught: everything, like the morning mist, the dew, the flower, to endure but a moment and to vanish away: nothing eternal: no Good, but to eat, drink and be merry: no Bad, but privation of these Goods? Was it not so written by the wise king and prophet, and did not he declare at last, in his old age, that all labor and travail are vanity, that man, with all his soaring aspirations, hopes, fears, struggles, reachings for the Infinite, is, after all, no better than the beast? All, he says, go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all alike turn to dust again.

Jesus, thinking of these things, with his face on the wet earth and his arms extended, lay motionless. If he could only sleep one hour it would help him to regain composure. But in his weak, nervous, agitated, and sleepless condition, the human fear of death now forced itself upon him. Death! and what a death! In the flight to Philippi and on the mount of Hermon the thought of death had been present, but only distant, uncertain, vague, — death, if at all, by stoning, which was swift and often painless. But now it was death by crucifixion, the most horrible punishment that could be devised by the cruel ingenuity of man.

When a boy at Nazareth, Jesus had witnessed the crucifixion of a number of the followers of Judas, the father of Jacobus. Their crosses had been erected near the great fountain, where all who came for water must see and take warning. He had been obliged to go there for water each day, and he saw their horrible sufferings. Some of them lingered in agony nine days. The impression made upon the mind and heart of the sensitive, imaginative boy was indelible. The horror of those crucifixions had haunted his dreams through his life. Such a fate might now be his. If he persisted in his present course, *he* might have to suffer that way. Could he do it and not betray his trust, not yield? Was there no other way?

Over this he prayed and wrestled in an agony such as only divine men and women can know. The hardened brute of the slums, with fiendish pride, will repress contortion even after the gallows drop has fallen, admired by the crowd of "sports" who are watching to see if their hero dies "game," while a Cranmer or Savonarola, overpowered with pain and horror, cannot repress the human sob. In every divine man there is a strain of the feminine. The woman who screams in terror of a mouse, when the time comes and the call sounds, will meet the tiger's glare with a smile.

Jesus was yet in the wavering balance: he had not yet conquered his horror of being crucified. And why need he face this horror? He had only to speak the word, and Jacobus, with all Israel at his back, would spring to arms, and instead of dying ignominiously and horribly, there was the World's Crown offered him. What need to suffer and die when even his Father in Heaven had forsaken him. In this, his last extremity, there was no Bath Quol, no voice of God, no angels in the sky. Except one whom his heart knew, there was not a being, human or divine, who would stand by him and stay him up in this his hour of need.

Jesus had charged the disciples to watch, with a vague idea of warning or flight. He *might* once more flee away and at least put off the evil day, and perhaps God in mercy would show other means, as He did to Abraham. And so in his agony Jesus prayed that this cup might pass, and that some other way might be shown.

When Jesus at last arose, he saw a figure draped in white, kneeling on the ground near him. His first thought was that God had sent an angel at last to rescue him. At the instant, the moon, sailing swiftly out from behind a cloud, showed to him Mary of Magdala, and *she* was praying. Her white face, wan and pale, turned upwards in the pure moonlight, was almost too beautiful to be of

earth. Jesus was awed! Could it be Mary herself or was it her angel, who at all times beheld the face of the Father?

At last Mary opened her eyes, and, looking upon Jesus, smiled, as if with all her sadness she was glad. It was the rainbow over the cataract. And Jesus felt his heart swell and his whole being lifted into a new life, as if, casting aside as a soiled garment his body of clay, he was at once cleansed of all that pertained to it, hopes, fears, obstructions, and was at last truly the very Son of God.

Light, fleecy clouds, diaphanous and gauzy, edged and shot through with silver and golden light, in swiftly changing shapes were streaming past the moon, and Jesus and Mary, looking up, thought they saw the Angel Host, and heard heavenly voices singing and praising God. While they watched and listened, breathless, the moon passed under a thick, black cloud, and there were pattering drops of rain.

“And so it is really the will of God that Salvation should come by me,” said Jesus reverently. “Amen. And thou, Mary, art the herald of good tidings. Thou art God’s messenger to me.”

Jesus and Mary arose from their knees and looked towards Jerusalem. The Temple Towers were still blazing with light, and farther away up on the slope of Zion, marked also with innumerable lamps, were seen the palaces of Pilate, of Caiaphas, and of Annas. As they gazed, out from the eastern gate of the city streamed a great company of men bearing torches, and came swiftly along on the road leading to Olivet. Both Jesus and Mary knew what it meant. Mary had not yet spoken.

“Thou art in God’s hands,” she said. “I had thought with my weak hands to deliver thee from death; but God hath shown me the truth as thou hast taught it. I am but a meddler. God will do what He will with His own.”

The parting of Jesus and Mary at Gethsemane requires no veil. A love like theirs may stand sublimely bare and

nude, as a sunbeam or a flower. Jesus explained to Mary that he was now reconciled to death and no longer feared it, and that if he died now he would come again. Mary was comforted by this assurance, for she believed it implicitly; and yet there was still in her the human shrinking from the pain of separation and the horror of death. And now the tramp of many feet and the clatter of arms are heard, and from below the hill the light of torches flares upwards, flickering among the treetops and along the wall above.

Jesus started to go: he thought to meet the guard in time to prevent the arrest of the disciples, who were still asleep. Mary, who had fallen to her knees, caught at Jesus' robe and detained him. "Oh, and without one word!" she cried,—a bitter cry. Jesus turned and placed a hand on Mary's head. They gazed long in each other's eyes, but it was a gaze purified from all earthly taint, a mingling of pure souls. There were no more words, and no parting kiss. Jesus only went silently away, and Mary was satisfied.

LXV

NO WAVERING

"When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?"—Luke xxii-49.

When Jesus came where the disciples were, he found them all asleep. He had fully accepted the fate that awaited him, and no longer thought of flight. His only care now was to save his disciples from sharing his doom. He therefore awakened them, and showing them the approaching Guards, told them to fly. This the disciples would have done at once, but while Jesus was arousing them there appeared streaming in upon them from all directions a considerable body of armed men, and their leader, a giant in armor and bearing a huge sword like that of Goliath of old, called out to them to stand.

They all immediately recognized Jacobus in the leader, and their courage and hopes were at once so much revived that they thought at first that the Great Day and hour had surely arrived. But by this the Temple Guards were so near at hand that there was no time for coming to any understanding, and Jesus, turning away from Jacobus and the disciples, went forward to meet the Guards with the design to deliver himself up, and thereby, if possible, save his disciples and also prevent a conflict with Jacobus. But when Jesus went forward, Jacobus and his band, with all the disciples among them, followed close behind, while Jacobus himself was almost at Jesus' side. But Jesus gave no sign that he recognized Jacobus or was even aware of his presence.

The Guards having now all got within the garden enclosure, Jesus called out to them, asking whom they sought. In the glare of the torches the Captain of the Guards was

easy to distinguish, and close beside him, Judas. By this, Jesus, with Jacobus and his band, had drawn so near that they could be plainly seen by the Guards, and some among them, recognizing the renowned leader of the Zealots, at once whispered the discovery to others, and in a moment there was almost a panic of fear among the Guards, many of them still suffering from the hurts they had received at the cleansing of the Temple.

But Jesus, seeing their fear, called out to reassure them, and told them that he was Jesus of Nazareth, and that he would go with them himself without resistance, if they would spare the disciples and those who were with him. To this the Captain of the Guards, in great fear of Jacobus and his band, at once agreed, much to the chagrin of Judas, who had designated John as a chief disciple of Jesus and one who should not escape. Jesus now started forward to deliver himself up, but was arrested by Jacobus, who besought him not to do so.

"You must know," he said, "the fate that awaits you! And these cravens we can brush aside like cobwebs. Remember how easily we prevailed in the Temple that day. It is weak and cowardly to give up all in this way, and when we have arms in our hands. The fate of Israel and of the world hangs now on one brave word from you. Speak: shall we smite them?"

In the meantime Peter, who, with Simon Zelotes and Judas, had carried short swords under their abas, had got out his sword, and seeing the cowardly fear of the Guard and believing that a conflict was now inevitable, had provoked a quarrel with a servant of Caiaphas whom he knew, and with some bravado and loud talk had slashed off his ear. Jesus, seeing the imminent peril into which the rashness of Peter was bringing them, left Jacobus and hastened to interfere, rebuking Peter severely. He told him to put up his sword and cease to think of any violence. ,

"A sword will indeed go out after the enemies of God,"

he said. "God may employ the sword to accomplish His purposes, but man may not do so. The mission of the Son of Man is Peace."

And Jesus put out his hand, and allowed himself to be bound and led away.

When Jacobus and the disciples saw that Jesus was fully determined to permit no violence, and voluntarily surrendered himself to be bound, they felt that there was nothing more to be said or done. They knew that the Jerusalem Hierarchy would proceed promptly and with a high hand against all who had been prominent in their support of Jesus, and they all became suddenly aware that their own heads were in danger. Jacobus and his band utterly disgusted with what they looked upon as poltroonery in Jesus, at once scattered and disappeared, as silently and mysteriously as they had come.

The disciples, after a hasty consultation, decided to break up and get back to Galilee as the only course of safety, though Peter and John, with some show of bravery, declared that they would remain in hiding for a while, or at least till they could learn the fate of the Master. John was acquainted with some of the head servants at the house of Caiaphas, and he thought they might so disguise themselves as to escape recognition.

And so while the rest at once started back on the road towards Galilee, Peter and John, cautiously following the torches, which they could now see crossing the bridge over the Kidron, with faint, despairing hearts bent their steps towards Jerusalem.

LXVI

PETER'S DENIAL

"When Peter, therefore, began to curse and swear on that dismal night of temptation, we are not to suppose that it was something foreign to his former habits. He merely relapsed!"—Thompson: "The Land and the Book."

In the suddenness and haste of the call to arrest Jesus definite instructions had not been given to the Captain of the Guard, and he, supposing that Annas, as the real head of the Hierarchy, would assume control of Jesus, took him at once to the palace of Annas. But Annas' wife decided this matter very promptly. She was indignant that any one should presume to defile the immaculate cleanliness and order of her house by the entrance of such an unclean rabble of Guards and, as she said, lifting her hand in horror, "a malefactor." She told Annas that he must order the company to proceed elsewhere, and so Annas ordered the Captain to take Jesus to Caiaphas, and keep guard over him there till morning, when he himself would come and see what was best to be done.

This order of Annas required another long march through the city, and now it was raining again. When they arrived at the palace of Caiaphas it was long past midnight and Jesus, from lack of sleep, wet with the rain, and chilled through by the night air, was not only exhausted and wretched in body, but excessive effort and long suffering had obscured the clearness of his mind. He felt that he was at a great disadvantage, and would be unable to answer and defend himself against the experienced and crafty old lawyers and doctors who would question him. He almost succumbed to a panic of fear that, through sheer weakness of the flesh, he would say or do something to discredit his mission, his work. And so, as he dragged

his weary steps along through the muddy streets, there was constantly in his heart a wordless prayer to God for strength and guidance.

When they arrived at the palace of Caiaphas, they were ushered into the great open court, roofless and bare, such as belonged to all great houses in the East. The Temple Guard, lawless, pampered and unused to exposure, were cold and wet and in bad temper. They thought themselves ill-used, to be kept all night from their warm beds and forced to stand out in rain and mud on so slight an occasion.

Meantime Peter and John, skulking behind, came to the gate and knocked. As John had anticipated, the gate was opened by one whom he knew, and he was admitted. After talking to the gate keeper, John prevailed upon her to admit Peter also. But John, knowing the enmity of Judas and seeing him with the Guard about the fire, dared not show himself, but kept concealed in a dark corner near the gate, where he could see without being seen and where he was supplied by the gate keeper with a dry cloak.

Peter, having no fear of Judas and suffering from cold and wet, after hanging about in the background for some time at last plucked up courage to press in among the Guards and get near enough to the fire to get a little warmth from it. He had pulled the cape of his aba over his head so as to conceal his face as much as possible, but when he came crowding in among the Guards, he was eyed suspiciously.

Finally one of them, a sturdy rogue, said, "This fellow must be one of the followers of this Nazarene King of the Jews."

At the same time he pulled away the cape from Peter's face, and called out to Judas, who stood near, "Judas, isn't this one of them? Don't you know this fellow?"

Judas had no enmity against Peter and made only an evasive answer, which so encouraged Peter that he boldly

denied that he belonged to Jesus' following. "You mistake your man," he said, "I don't know him."

But many eyes were now fixed upon Peter, and there were whisperings and dark looks which made Peter very uneasy, and as soon as he had warmed himself a little he slunk away and went out into the porch.

But by this time more of a crowd had gathered, and there were men on the porch whispering and talking earnestly together, and a maid who had seen Peter come in with John, now passing that way, called out to the bystanders and pointed out Peter as one who belonged to Jesus. Peter, startled by this second attack and thinking now only of his own peril, denied again and with more emphasis; but he saw that the bystanders winked knowingly to each other and watched him suspiciously. Then in the porch he soon felt the cold again in his wet clothes, and the glowing fire became an irresistible attraction.

Peter went in and again pushed his way cautiously towards the fire; but he had no sooner got where he could feel a little of its warmth than one of the Guard, a talkative, blustering fellow, spoke to Peter and said, "Hello, neighbor, you seem to be as wet and cold as that King Jesus over there. I reckon you are one of those who were with him. By the Temple of God! I think I saw you there in the garden."

Peter was now thoroughly alarmed; he was no longer a disciple of Jesus, or even a respectable Jew. He had reverted to Simon, Son of Jona; he was again a rough fisherman of Galilee, contending for his life.

"Man," he said, bristling up, "what are you talking about? I know nothing of this Jesus you speak of. By the Great Mazar of Chorazin, it is thou, more like, who art a Nazarene. A curse light on thy great grandfather."

Peter had been squatting by the fire, and he now raised himself and looked about as if in indignation. Jesus had

not been permitted to come near the fire or even to sit down. He was suffering extremely from the cold, and was so weak and exhausted he could hardly stand. He was beginning to lose consciousness, and would soon have fallen where he stood.

He had supposed that all his disciples had deserted him, as he had expected they would, and he believed himself to be left to his fate, without a friend in the world; but when he saw Peter come in and walk boldly to the fire, his heart swelled with love and pride, and he straightened himself with new resolve. That a single believer remained faithful and true was enough; he would die worthily even for his sake. And now, as he watched and listened, he heard the sneering accusation of the Guard and then Peter's answer.

For a moment the court, the lights, and the fire swam around him, and he had like to have fallen. Was there, then, no faith or truth in man? It was the final blow. Then there came to his aid that last resource of all great souls, the noble pride of a man, a Son of God. Though friendless, utterly alone in the great universe, he would be true to *himself and to his origin*. His heart leaped within him; the hot blood surged to cheek and brow; and again he could look upon the world and death and Hell with the steadfast eye of their King and Master.

When Peter arose from before the fire, a great cock, which with many others had been brought in from the country for Caiaphas' table and was confined in a hamper in the court, crowed so loudly and so startlingly that Peter could not but remember what Jesus had said only a few hours before about a cock crowing. He did not know that Jesus was so near, but now the one object that, like a lode-stone, drew and riveted his gaze was Jesus' eyes, fixed upon him in mild but awful reproach.

That look Peter never forgot. As the years passed it

grew in his mind and heart till it became a perpetual presence in his life; it made of him "Petros the Stone." Every morning thereafter, as long as he lived, found Peter at cock-crowing on his knees and in tears.

LXVII

FORSAKEN

"Justin Martyr thrice asserts that all the acquaintances of Jesus forsook him and dispersed, until the reappearance of Jesus recalled them to their adherence to their faith. They fled to Galilee and did not linger in Jerusalem."— Keim.

When the capture of Jesus was announced to Caiaphas, he at once sent messengers to all the Sanhedrists, requesting their immediate attendance at his palace. He knew that only those of his own party or cabal would attend at so unseasonable an hour, and this was agreeable to his and Annas' plan. Numbers of the leading Sanhedrists, as Gamaliel and Nicodemus and Joseph, were known to be unalterably opposed to any proceedings against Jesus, and there was still the lurking fear that the people, under the leadership of the Zealots, might yet be found obstinately adhering to their Messiah and Prophet of Nazareth. Hence the unseemly haste.

As soon as ten of the seventy-one members of the Sanhedrin had assembled, the so-called trial of Jesus was begun. Some minions of Annas were called as witnesses, but their testimony was so absurd and contradictory that Caiaphas began to despair of getting even a decent excuse for his violent proceedings. But Jesus, knowing that if not in one way, then in another, he would be condemned, and wishing above all else to hasten the end while yet he had courage and strength to meet it manfully, voluntarily made the confession that alone was used to convict him.

In answer to Caiaphas' question, he declared himself to be the Messiah and Son of God, and told Caiaphas and the rest that they would live to see him come in the clouds with Angels, and sitting on the right hand of God. This amaz-

ing declaration they all believed to be nothing but the frenzy of a mad-man, but technically, according to Jewish law, it was also blasphemy; and so all the judges present declared it to be, and the penalty, of course, was death.

Caiaphas rent his fine white robe and pronounced Jesus accursed. But at this time no Jewish court had the power to punish capitally,—and crucifixion was never a Jewish punishment. Technically, Jesus might have been stoned under Jewish law, but never crucified. And the cabal that condemned him was determined on crucifixion as the most terrible and appalling punishment known. The plan had all been arranged beforehand, as Mary had told Jesus, and he understood it; knowing it was useless to make any defense, he did not attempt any.

It was Friday morning, the fifteenth day of April, a religious Feast Day, one of the most important and sacred of the Jewish calendar. These priests and lawyers and doctors who were seeking the life of Jesus were all strict churchmen and devout religionists. They must by no means neglect the demands of Mother Church, and it was quite a question with them whether it was lawful to engage in such business on so sacred an occasion; their sensitive and veracious consciences tormented them about the iniquity of doing carnal business on such a holy day. But some of the lawyers said there were *precedents*; and they found, besides, some assuagement in the reflection that so great a good as the murder of Jesus would go far before God to excuse the desecration of His holy day.

- Besides, by hurrying through with the disagreeable business they would yet have time to perform most of the religious ceremonies and repeat all the prayers. And so they salved their consciences for breaking the Feast Day, and went boldly forward. It was nearly day when the trial was ended at the house of Caiaphas, and Jesus, having been condemned to death by the cabal, was taken forthwith to the palace of Pilate for his confirmation of the sentence.

Jesus, with the sleepy, angry, and swearing Guard, again took to the muddy street, and the Rabbis in luxurious palanquins were carried by slaves to the palace of Pilate. It was not yet quite day, but Pilate had acquired the Eastern habit of early rising and was already up. The Temple Guard delivered Jesus bound to the Roman Guard, who were always in attendance at the palace of Pilate, and then retired. Neither they nor the priests nor doctors nor lawyers who had come to demand the execution of Jesus would enter the house of a "heathen" on the Feast Day, because they would thereby be made "unclean" and be incapacitated for making the usual sacrifices to God and repeating the prayers. And so they remained without, on a broad open space called the "Pavement," which was before the house of Pilate.

By Roman law and usage Pilate might have required the accusers of Jesus to come within and prefer their charges regularly in the Judgment Hall designed for such purposes, but, urged by Procula, he disdainfully yielded the point and went out on the porch, and there asked of the Rabbis what it was that they charged Jesus with.

They answered at first that he was a malefactor, that they had given him due trial and found him worthy of death, and asked Pilate to confirm the sentence. But Pilate, who already knew about how the matter stood, told them to go away and deal with Jesus as their own Law directed. This Pilate did, knowing that they could no more than sentence Jesus to be stoned, and *that*, for fear of the people, they would not dare attempt. But the Rabbis were not to be thus foiled and at once set up the accusation that Jesus' chief offense was against Rome.

They told how Jesus had been in league with the Zealots for many years, and how Jacobus and his band, under orders from Jesus, had made an attack on the Temple, disordering all affairs and causing great losses to "business men" in Jerusalem. It was well known, of

course, that the Zealots were opposed to Rome, and refused to pay taxes; and Jesus was one of them. *He* refused to pay taxes, and had set himself up to be a King. Pilate was not for a moment deceived, for Varus had kept him informed about all these matters, and he knew well how these crafty old Rabbis could make trouble for him at Rome; and so he thought it the best policy to make some concessions.

Besides, Procula, who had seen Jesus and heard him talk, had urged Pilate to see him and talk with him. She believed that Pilate would be deeply impressed with him, as she had been. And so Pilate went back into the Judgment Hall, where Jesus was alone with the soldiers, and called him before him. Outwardly, Jesus was in bad plight to answer for his life. He was exceedingly worn, and his feet and garments were bedraggled with mud. His hair and beard and clothing were disordered and soiled. Then at the palace of Caiaphas, some minions of the High Priest, anxious to show their zeal and servility, had struck him in the face, leaving black marks and a smear of blood. But Jesus was now in that exalted state to which all true martyrs attain: a state in which neither weariness, pain, fear, sickness nor any mortal ill has power; and he stood up erect before Pilate and met his stern, scrutinizing gaze with a calm and majestic serenity that amazed Pilate. Jesus faced this proud representative of almighty Rome and the Cæsars with the same simple dignity that he did every other man, without defiance and without servility,—*as a brother man!*

After looking at Jesus for a time in silence, Pilate spoke abstractedly, as if half communing with himself, "Thou art indeed a King." Then directly to Jesus: "They charge against thee that thou hast set up to be King of the Jews. What answer makest thou?"

"*Thou* sayest that I am a King, as do the Jews; and so I am. But my Kingdom is not of this world. The serv-

ants of a King fight for Kingdom and crown; and so will my servants fight, not with sword and spear but with the soul, with heart and mind. They shall do battle, even as do I, unto death. Dost thou ask to what end? That man may cease to wrong his brother man, that justice and righteousness may prevail, and that all men may see and know the *Truth*."

Jesus knew that the Roman Governor was a man of education and culture, and he talked to him as he had to Nicodemus and Joseph and some others whom he knew would understand. Pilate gazed upon Jesus more than ever amazed.

"Yes! See and know the Truth," he murmured, and repeated to himself, "See and know the Truth! This is what the Philosophers have been seeking from Thales down to our poor Seneca. Yes, Truth. Truth! *What is Truth?*"

And Pilate, profoundly moved by the words, and more by the manner, of Jesus, walked up and down the jasper pavement of the Prætorium, while the rude soldiers in the background stared and wondered. Pilate was thinking of his own lost youth: of its pure and noble aspirations, of the venerable old Greek who taught him Philosophy and discoursed of Xenophanes and Plato and Socrates.

"And these besotted Jews would kill this man because he would try to have them know the Truth. And so goes the world. Socrates died that way."

So soliloquized Pilate. Then, turning to Jesus, he said, "I see nothing worthy of death in thee. Thou art free!"

Pilate then ordered the officer of the Guard to unbind Jesus and let him go, while he himself went out on the porch above the pavement and gave his decision to the Jews.

Meanwhile Annas and Caiaphas, careful not to be personally present, had been very active. They had ordered out all the swarm of priests, Levites, traders, money-

changers, and hangers-on about the Temple, to appear and help sustain the accusation against Jesus at the palace of Pilate. All the slaves, servants, and armed retainers of the great Rabbis of their party were also sent thither. The clubmen of Phabi and the spearmen of Boethus, the Temple Guard, and the Clubmen of Annas were likewise ordered thither, with instructions not only to swell the cry against Jesus, but to silence with force any expression of the people in Jesus' defense. There was also a great number of common people in Jerusalem who got an easy living from the Temple and its services, and who, under the cloak of religion, could be depended on to cry down anything that threatened a change. These were stirred up by Annas' messengers and were present in force. And so when Pilate went out on the balcony to address the people, he saw before him an immense throng, among whom the few friends of Jesus dared not raise a voice.

At the moment when Pilate appeared on the balcony, Jesus was thrust forth from below, and Pilate, pointing to him, told the Jews, with bitter irony, that he had given them back their King and that their accusation seemed to him foolish and whimsical, and that he could see no fault in him.

"Now, it being the custom," he said, "that I release unto you one prisoner at this time, let me advise that you choose this Jesus to be set free."

The crowd, already instructed what to say, raised the cry of "Barabbas, not this Jesus, but Barabbas! Barabbas! Barabbas!"

Now Barabbas was the son of a noted Rabbi of Jerusalem, and had been very popular there; and so his father had been able to prevail on Annas to allow an effort to be made to save him. Barabbas' Zealot proclivities were well known to Annas, but he trusted, as assured by the young man's father, that he might by this experience be reformed; and as it was a choice between Barabbas and

Jesus, there could be no question with Annas who should be saved. And so when Pilate asked what he should do with Jesus, who was innocent, while Barabbas, as was well known, had been a troublesome Zealot and a raiser of sedition, again, in obedience to instructions, the answer was given: "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

This clamor was so great and prolonged that Pilate at last raised his hand in token of surrender, and when he had obtained silence he told the Jews that to afford them satisfaction, and not because he believed Jesus to be guilty, he would have him scourged, and that was all he would allow to be done to him. Then, without waiting for an answer, Pilate withdrew, and his guard were ordered to take Jesus and scourge him, as was customary to do with all malefactors.

Pilate would willingly have saved Jesus this terrible punishment, not only because there had been awakened in him a deep and sincere regard for Jesus, but also for Procula's sake, who that very morning had, with tears, importuned him to save Jesus and set him free. She said she had been warned in a dream,—a thing which Pilate could well believe, for, like all men of his day, he had faith in dreams. But this matter of Jesus Pilate well knew involved questions of State and of the gravest import. All Israel, from India and the Euphrates to farthest Britain and Hibernia, was in a ferment about what they called their Messiah, and this Jesus some thought was the Messiah.

Pilate understood very little about the Jewish notions of the Messiah, but he knew that Roman dominion was threatened, and to maintain his own official position as Procurator he must walk very circumspectly. He remembered how delegations of Rabbis to Rome had succeeded in disgracing greater men than he. He had already some experience of the craft of Annas and Caiaphas, and realized that with this and their enormous wealth they could doubtless accomplish his ruin at Rome.

And so he gave the order for Jesus to be scourged, at the same time cautioning the Captain of the Guard not to inflict the extreme penalty, which not infrequently resulted in death. His order for clemency, though obeyed, was not needed, for Varus, who was in command of all the soldiery in Jerusalem, had given strict orders that Jesus should be treated with all possible kindness and respect. And so, though Jesus was scourged and blood ran down to his feet, his punishment was considered moderate; his bones were not laid bare by the lash or his bowels exposed, as Cicero tells us often happened in Roman scourgings.

Jesus bore it without a word or a groan, and when all was done he sat down among the soldiers and talked to them. None of these soldiers of Pilate were Jews, and some of them were Roman citizens. Jesus could talk to them now more freely than to Jews, as man to man, without prejudice or passion. He soon won their hearts, and they did all they could in their rude way to relieve his pain. Jesus showed them how their wild trade of war led inevitably to sin and misery, and how the lives of millions of simple, kindly people were yearly sacrificed merely to satisfy the beastly passions of cruel rulers: and in a few brief words he pictured to their minds what they had never thought of before: the happiness and beauty there might be in the world if men would be just and love others as themselves.

Meantime the uproar outside had begun again, more loud and savage than before, and the terrible words, Crucify him! Crucify him! borne alike to the ears of the wavering Pilate and to Jesus, told them plainly enough that the scourging had been only added cruelty. It is full daylight now, and the throng outside is growing momentarily. The more wealthy and influential Rabbis, too luxurious to turn out at the first call in the night, did not appear at the examination before Caiaphas; but they are coming now in haste.

Standing on the balcony above, from which Pilate ad-

dresses the people, we may see scattered far and wide among the crowd the Temple Guard, known by their shining breastplates, and the Clubmen of Annas, known by their livery and their clubs.

And now, turning in at the great gate by the tower, is a company of sturdy fellows marching in compact order and armed with spears. They are the feared and hated spearmen of Boethus, and behind them, reclining in a costly palanquin, is borne by slaves our old acquaintance, the Rabbi Boethus, and his brother Eleazer. Closely following the brothers Boethus and borne, as they, by slaves and preceded by a host of retainers, come Johanan Ben Nebedai, and then Simon Kanthera, "the quarrelsome," both great Rabbis, destined soon to acquire world-wide fame,—the one as the persecutor of Saint Paul and the other as the murderer of Saint James.

Our old acquaintance Rabbi Eliab, and the lawyer Alexander, with several other Sanhedrists, are already here, close by under the balcony. And now, last of all, in a style fitting a King, comes the noted Ishmael Ben Phabi, called "the handsomest man of his day." His gorgeous palanquin is borne by giant Nubian slaves in their native dress, and he, too, is preceded and surrounded by a large company of clubmen scarcely less hated and feared than those of Annas. The packed throng gives way before them like sheep fleeing from wolves: they have too often felt the blows from those silver-mounted staves of ebony not to show due respect for them, and a sounding whack here and there is a sufficient reminder.

The crowd has now grown to a vast multitude, and filling all the space between the palace and the great tower, it presses close upon the Roman sentry who, simply in half armor and armed only with a sword, grimly paces up and down before the tower gate. Above, on the terraces of the tower and leaning over the coping, are several hundred more of his fellow soldiers, who are curiously regarding

the spectacle as a very tame sort of show. Some of the younger ones are disposed to banter and poke fun at the Jewish throng, but are sternly reproved by the officers among them. They have received strict orders from Pilate to avoid all occasion of offense. He knows well the frantic fanaticism of these stubborn Jews, and remembers that on this very spot that sedition about the aqueduct was with difficulty and slaughter put down, when Barabbas was identified as a murderer and Simon, the brother of Jacobus, was slain. The scars of that terrible day are yet visible. The shattered statues and broken trees and shrubs have not all been replaced, and a dent in the marble wall of the balcony where Pilate to-day stands shows where a stone from the sling of a maddened Zealot came so near that day to ending his life.

Within is Pilate, consulting his counselors. The suggestion is made that Jesus, being a Galilean, be sent to Herod for trial. This lets in a ray of hope and Pilate grasps at it eagerly. Herod is, or at least professes to be, a Jew. Let him adjudicate and answer to the Jews, and also to Rome, for what is done. At least the offer, coming from Pilate, will be flattering to Herod's vanity.

Pilate, again confronting the throng, announces this as his decision. Jesus shall go before Herod. And so, yet in the early morning, Jesus is sent under Roman guard to Herod, at the grand old palace of the Maccabees. The throng of people, still increasing in numbers, follows after and, surrounding the palace, makes the same fierce outcry and demand as of Pilate.

Herod was at first pleased and flattered. He had desired to see Jesus more from curiosity than for anything else; but when he came to meet him face to face and talk with him, he was impressed and perplexed as much as Pilate. He saw, as had Pilate, the reason for Jesus' vast personal influence with the people, and he trembled, ending his examination almost in a panic of fear. He saw the true

ground of Pilate's deferring to him, which made him the more afraid to act himself. If Pilate dared not judge Jesus, how could he? Advised by the shrewd and contriving Herodias, Herod decided to imitate the policy of Pilate and attempt to satisfy the party of Annas by insulting and abusing Jesus to the utmost limit short of death,—and then return him to Pilate.

And so Jesus was turned over to Herod's bodyguard, with what was sufficient,—a hint that his life only was to be spared. Unlike the soldiers of Pilate, Herod's Guard were nearly all renegade Jews of bad character, who scrupled not at any enormity and, while yet Jews, would fight at a word against Moses or the Law, though they were ignorant of Moses and violated the Law in every particular. They had heard of Jesus, and entertained a bad opinion of him because, it was said, he spoke against Moses and the Law. They were glad to have an opportunity to show their zeal for Moses and the Law!

When Jesus was turned over to them, they began by abusing him shamefully. They struck him, spit upon him, and, to make a mock of his Kingship, they put a purple robe upon him; and one, more cunning in cruelty than the rest, ran out and gathered a quantity of a thorny shrub, with which he made a sort of wreath or crown that he forced violently down upon the head of Jesus. But even then the noble patience and fortitude of Jesus at last prevailed. The soldiers, in a presence so august, so serenely self-forgotten, grew ashamed. Their leader at length forbade further abuse and began to listen to Jesus' words.

Jesus talked to them much as he had to the soldiers of Pilate,—not a word of complaint or about himself, but with mind and heart still fixed upon his work, his mission to mankind. A year later many of these soldiers of Herod were zealous converts to the new religion.

When Herod was told of the crown of thorns and the

purple robe, he thought it a pleasant jest to send Jesus back to Pilate still wearing those emblems of royalty, and so it was ordered. When, therefore, Jesus, with the Scribes and Pharisees and the multitudes, returned to Pilate, the latter stood, as before, outside on the balcony to receive them. When he saw Jesus with the purple robe and the crown of thorns and all that was done to him, and noted the yet serene majesty of his bearing, he had Jesus brought up on the balcony, where the whole multitude could see him; and when he had obtained silence, he called out to them, pointing with his hand to Jesus, "*Behold the Man!*"

For a full minute there was no answer or cry. The multitude gazed in wonder and admiration, while the priests and lawyers whispered and scowled. Then the lawyer Alexander brazenly shouted the former cry, "Away with him. Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Instantly it was taken up by the different clubmen, spearmen, and retainers of the great Rabbis, and soon, repeated by the greater part of the crowd, it was swelled to a roar that seemed to be the voice of all the people. Pilate was now aroused and angry. He was more than ever determined to save Jesus, whose whole conduct and bearing grew every moment in his respect; but feeling the necessity for caution, Pilate restrained himself, and after again obtaining silence, he attempted to argue with the Rabbis. He showed them that by no law, Roman or Jewish, could Jesus be condemned to death on the cross, and even to stone him they must first convict him of some crime in a regular way. They had not done that. Their regular court, the Sanhedrin, he told them plainly, he knew had not been allowed to pass upon the case, and to execute Jesus now would be pure murder.

"Your own Herod," he said, "a Jew like yourselves and learned in your law, decides against you, just as I have done. And besides, as I said before: Behold the Man himself, *worthy* to be a King; and you seek to murder him.

Away with you, false and unjust accusers! Away, I say! Away!"

Pilate had come close to the front of the balcony, and leaning over the coping, shook his clenched fist and shouted loud and angrily. For a minute or two there was silence. Men looked from one to another with a vague sense of fear. The mailed hand of Rome was a thing not lightly to be defied. They had felt its might too often to regard it lightly. Again among the group of Rabbis in front of the balcony there was whispering and scowling.

This time Boethus, as the more crafty and courtly, at last spoke in answer to Pilate. He suavely acknowledged the truth of "the most noble Pilate's" objection, but "humbly begged leave" to state at some length the considerations that most influenced them to push the matter to such an extreme.

"It is," he said, "in very truth our loyalty to Cæsar and to Rome. We are so sure that this man Jesus is working to overthrow Roman authority here in Palestine that, as true subjects of Cæsar, we have felt that it was right to proceed as we have and safeguard the rights of our Lord and Master, Cæsar, by such means as were at hand. For yourself, too, as our most noble Governor and friend of Cæsar, we have felt that it was best that this sedition be nipped in the bud. Evil tongues might wag, and Cæsar be informed that thou art slow to sustain his authority or to put down one who sets up to be a rival King. Such an event, Most Noble Pilate, would be to us, as to thee, exceedingly painful, and we would guard against it by all means; and we would most humbly call to your mind that well-known principle in government, that the end may justify the means. Lastly, as a charge which has not yet been formally presented to your Highness, this man Jesus has so far arrogated to himself the title of Cæsar as, like him, to assume the style of Son of God. For this cause, among many others, we ask his death."

Though this artful speech did not deceive Pilate, he was deeply alarmed by it. The covert threat that his conduct would be reported to Cæsar, and then this charge that Jesus claimed to be a Son of God filled him again with doubt and apprehension. He remembered that Alexander and many other kings had set up a similar claim. So he commanded Jesus to follow him, and withdrew again into the Prætorium.

"What is this," he asked when they were alone, "what is this they say of thee, that thou claimest to be a Son of God?"

"Thou, too, and all men are Sons of God if you do God's will," answered Jesus, simply.

"Is that all?" asked Pilate.

"That is all," answered Jesus.

Pilate was philosopher enough to understand this, and yet there was much about Jesus yet unexplained. In all that had passed, all the abuse, the blows, the scourgings, the crown of thorns, Jesus had not uttered any complaint, had made no defense, had in no way shown any thought or care for himself, but only for his doctrine, his work, the Truth. This man, brought before him to answer and plead for his life, had not even asked for what both Roman and Jewish Law gave, a lawyer to defend him. Pilate could not understand it.

"You are of course aware," he said, "that you are entitled to have a lawyer appointed by the Court to defend you if you do not wish to defend yourself."

Jesus answered that he was aware of it.

"And you must know that, as the case now stands, I have power to release you if I see fit, and I can order you to be crucified if I see fit."

Jesus answered, "Yes, I know."

"And you still decline to make any defense?" asked Pilate.

Jesus straightened himself, and met Pilate's eyes firmly

but mildly. "You," he said, "like every other man, are but a creature in God's hands. The part you have to play in this business has been assigned you. You can do no other; and it is all for the best. God, unlike man, may choose any means to work His will. The very Devils serve him. I know that in this hour of my need I have not on this earth a man upon whom I can depend. All have denied me and fled. I have no friend. I am alone. There is none to speak for me. I must die. And yet," raising his face towards the sky, while his whole form dilated and his eyes kindled, "and yet I say unto ye, the Great Day of the Lord is at hand, the time spoken of by the holy Prophets when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, when the lion shall eat straw like an ox, when the child shall play on the hole of the asp, when men shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and nations learn war no more. And then shall ye see me coming in the clouds with Angels, sitting on the right hand of God, with power and great glory."

If there had remained anything that could add to Pilate's previous perplexity and amazement, that addition he had now received. He gazed upon the rapt face of Jesus with a vague sense of awe and alarm. Then he thought of what he had heard among so many other things about Jesus, that by many he was thought to be insane. Yes, he was insane. That explained it all. And Pilate, ordering a servant to bring him a basin of water, went out on the balcony.

LXVIII

THE CRUCIFIXION

“Scramble along, thou insane scramble of a world, with thy pope’s tiaras, king’s mantles, and beggar’s gabardines, chivalry-ribbons, and plebeian gallows-ropes, where a Paul shall die on the gibbet and a Nero sit fiddling as imperial Cæsar.”—Carlyle.

The Roman officer Vespillo, put in charge of the execution of Jesus, was selected and specially charged by Varus for the occasion. He was of the same family as Q. Lucretius Vespillo. Being a just and a righteous man, as were still many Romans, his sympathies were wholly with Jesus, and from the first he made it as easy for him as was possible. He relieved him, at the outset, of the painful burden of carrying his own cross, as was the custom, and in fastening him to the cross he followed the more merciful way of binding his feet without driving nails through them.

The soldiers who guarded him were the same as those who had done the scourging; but the sincere friendliness of Jesus, the entire absence in him of anger, bitterness, or complaint, with his kindly words and noble bearing, had entirely won over to him the rough soldiery. They, like all Romans, hated the Jews as a People, and Jesus, as it appeared, was hated of the Jews. For this, also, the Roman soldiers were drawn towards Jesus. In these last bitter hours, deserted of all the world, every disciple fled, friendless, alone, struck, scourged, spit upon, Jesus gained more true and lasting friends and made a deeper impression upon the world than in all his past.

Men who saw with their own eyes this exhibition of meekness, fortitude, and faithfulness on the one side, and of hatred, cruelty, and narrow selfishness on the other, were

led to inquire of their own hearts what no preaching would ever suggest. It was the Kindergarten of the Christian Religion, *the* object lesson we all must learn ere we come to the foot of the true cross.

The way chosen from the palace of Pilate to Calvary was purposely long, so that the exhibition might be witnessed by more people. And not only was the way thronged, but Calvary itself, a bare rocky hill outside the city walls, was covered with a dense throng. Passover Pilgrims from all lands were there, and the story of the cross was carried home to Babylonia and India and to Gaul and Britain. Scattered plentifully among the crowd were dark, scowling, implacable Zealots and fierce, vengeful Sicarii, but, as Varus had assured Pilate, "Their teeth are drawn and their talons pared."

Jesus had denied them, and for the present they were in confusion, without plans. It was the same on all sides. The expectations that had been raised at the time of Jesus' triumphal entry into the city and of the cleansing of the Temple were no longer entertained. The Romans were still in power, and the hated Hierarchy of Jerusalem and the Temple was now before their very eyes putting to death this Jesus, who had professed to be the Son of God and who said he had angels at command. All men who were supposed to think and reason had given up Jesus. His best friends, though still drawn to him by tender love, were forced to admit that he had failed. They still revered and admired his exalted character, but they now looked upon him as one a little off mentally, an extravagant Idealist whose dreams were very beautiful and grand, but impracticable. They stood by the way, and saw Jesus pass on to death, with dry eyes and stony hearts. But there were women, those unreasoning creatures who only feel and act, who, even in this hour of darkness when all men denied and forsook, still believed and *loved*. While on that weary march from Pilate's palace to Calvary Jesus

received from no man a word of cheer or a look of sympathy or love, by hundreds of women he was greeted with blessings and with tears.

One tall, veiled figure had pressed near to Jesus' side when he started out. The soldiers at first pushed her rudely aside, but when they looked into her wondrous, pleading eyes, they silently gave place to her; and without speaking, she kept near to Jesus' side to the end. In the same company with Jesus, and bearing their crosses, were our old acquaintances Boaz and Ehud,—Boaz, with the old, inexpugnable superstition of a Galilean fisherman, still vaguely looking to Jesus for some miraculous deliverance, and Ehud fiercely indignant and contemptuous of the weak man who seemed to him to have betrayed them.

Even on the cross Ehud reviled Jesus, while poor Boaz to the last believed in Israel's New Kingdom and hoped to see it. "Remember me," he pleaded, "when thou comest into thy Kingdom."

All fishermen are superstitious, and so are soldiers. By the time the place of crucifixion was reached the soldiers had begun to look upon the tall, veiled figure of the woman with those marvelous eyes with a superstitious awe. Jesus, they had heard, was a great magician, and this woman might be a sorceress. With those inscrutable eyes fastened upon them, they handled Jesus very tenderly because, if for no other reason, that figure with the eyes was watching them.

When Jesus was fastened to the cross, the woman took out of her bosom a flask and offered it to him to drink. He knew that it was an opiate, which would dull the pain, and he refused it gently.

"No," he said, "I will pay the whole price."

The woman did not speak, but kneeled down at the foot of the cross and remained there,—the soldiers not troubling her,—till the last. The other Galilean women, who still loved Jesus, were in the crowd, but they were

afraid and stood "afar off," as did also Peter and John. When Jesus looked around there was no old friend in sight but the silent, kneeling figure at his feet. Then came the thought of his betrayal by one of his own chosen twelve, of Peter's cowardly and profane denial, and the desertion of all. Even the tender-hearted women, except this out-cast, had fled. His own mother and sisters and brothers, alas! where were they?

And then the surging, crushing, blinding agony of the torturing cross came upon him, and dimly through his pain he heard Ehud at his side cursing him for an impostor and a fool, and he remembered his unanswered prayer of agony in the garden, that God in mercy would spare him this; and again the old, black, suffocating shadow of Doubt came upon him.

Was there, then, no God? Had he no Father in Heaven? Was it all a dream, his life a mistake and a failure, and no tongue or voice or witness left to preserve the Truth? The Truth? Alas! was it all a lie?

And forgetting his pain, Jesus raised his eyes to Heaven and cried, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"

Then, looking down upon the kneeling figure at his feet, he met again those sad, rebuking eyes. A spasm of more terrible agony seized him; but ineradicably through his pain the gracious thought arose, "It is enough. In her is the divine spark that will light the world,—the little leaven, the grain of mustard seed. My Father, I thank thee that it is even so. What thou hast withheld from the wise and prudent thou hast revealed unto babes."

It was the day preceding the Jewish Sabbath, and the priests, lawyers, and doctors, those High Churchmen who had procured Jesus' death, were horrified at the thought of their victim hanging on the cross on the Sabbath. It would desecrate the day. God, who had commanded them to crucify Jesus, would be offended at the sight of male-

factors writhing in agony, screaming, and perhaps cursing and blaspheming, on His Holy Day. So they had obtained from Pilate an order that all three on the crosses should be pounded to death with clubs before the set of sun. It was really a mercy to do so, though what the Hierarchy believed to be a higher motive than mercy, namely, sacerdotalism, had induced them to get it done. They did not think it was sacerdotalism; they believed it was reverence for God.

The Centurion who had charge of the execution was a grizzled old soldier, who had camped amid the snows of Gaul, endured the heat and thirst of Parthian deserts, and spread his blanket in the shadow of Luxor and the Pyramids. He had met most shapes of men that Universal Empire could furnish, and his lessons had not been in vain. He knew men, and when his eye first lighted upon Jesus he was drawn towards him as by a secret spell. The words and manner of Jesus upon the cross had only deepened the impression. When the order came to mutilate the victims, the Centurion crushed the order in his hand and glanced fiercely at the messenger, but he held his tongue. Varus had already charged him to save Jesus what he could. But what could he do?

So intense and all absorbing was the interest in the execution of Jesus that no one had yet noticed much about the weather or any other outward conditions: but by mid-afternoon an unseasonable heat had become very oppressive even to the free-moving throng, and to those on the crosses, with the fever of dissolution in their blood, it made the climax of agony. Boaz and Ehud writhed and cursed with maniacal fury, uttering incoherent and horrible blasphemies, while Jesus, though able to repress such outward signs, bore on his brow the marks of agony. Once he whispered feebly, "I thirst," and in an instant a willing soldier gave him of his own soldier's ration of sour wine on a sponge.

At length the heat, from some strange cause, became almost unbearable. The sun did not shine clear and bright, but seemed obscured by vast clouds of red-colored dust. There was no slightest breath of wind, and the air had a stifling quality that made it hard to breathe. Weak persons in the crowd were fainting and falling. When Jesus had said "I thirst," the woman kneeling at his feet had sprung up to give him drink. Now, as she stood gazing as if transfixed by the awful sight, Jesus uttered a fearful cry, his head sank upon his breast, a convulsion passed over him, and then he was still. Then the woman, without uttering a cry, sank down as one dead at the foot of the cross.

At the same moment a violent rocking motion swept along the earth beneath their feet; the massive rock forming the hill was split, and the sides grated together. Great stones were rolled away from tombs and bodies displaced. In Jerusalem, at the Temple and elsewhere, were rents and fissures. A great cry arose from the crowd, and men fell upon their faces for fear. But the quake passed without serious harm, and men soon forget their fears.

And now the time had come when the men on the crosses must be killed. The Centurion gave the order, and Boaz and Ehud, breathing out curses and maledictions, were beaten to death with clubs. Coming last to Jesus, who seemed to be dead already, the soldiers asked if they should strike, but the Centurion shook his head and Jesus was spared. A little later and our old acquaintance, Joseph of Arimathea, with Nicodemus and a company of servants, an undertaker, and an embalmer appeared, with a written order from Pilate for the body of Jesus.

While these were carefully and tenderly taking Jesus down from the cross, the soldier who had given drink to Jesus raised up the woman who had fallen at its foot. After she had swallowed some of the sour wine, such as had been given to Jesus, she got up and followed Joseph and those who bore away the body of Jesus.

LXIX

FATALITIES

“And that should teach us
There’s a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.”—Hamlet.

When Judas, with the Guard, delivered Jesus to Caiaphas, an agent of the High Priest called to Judas as he was going away, and without giving him time to consider slipped into his hand a purse containing a small quantity of silver coins, and with the significant remark, “There is more to follow,” disappeared.

Judas was thunderstruck. What did this mean! What did they take him to be! A common informer, a bribe taker, the most despicable of wretches? He would throw the money in their teeth. Then out of curiosity he thought he would see how much they had thought his services worth. He took the purse where he could see and counted out the money carefully.—Thirty sixpences: a mere beggar’s fee! *Now* he felt not only enraged, but what was worse, humiliated. And “more to follow”: what did that mean? Judas began to have an uneasy feeling that he had been trapped. What were they going to do with Jesus, anyway?

Judas was essentially a “business man,”—indeed, the only “business man” in the whole company of Jesus; and for that he had been made their Business Agent. A Judean who had been much at Jerusalem, he understood the law as it was then interpreted and knew that for many years no religious offense had been punished capitally, but only by “Putting out of the Synagogue,” which is to say, excommunication. Even the good old orthodox punishment of stoning had gone out of date and had not been inflicted for a generation.

Judas had not the remotest thought that Jesus would be crucified. The plot to bring this about was known only to Mary and to Jesus. Judas was aware of the many and great protections which were thrown about a culprit by established Jewish Law: how, first, there must be a written indictment; how witnesses were charged by the presiding Judge to weigh well what they said, and to remember the value of human life; how a lawyer was appointed by the Court to defend the accused when he was unable himself to hire one; how no trial could be carried through in the night; and how judges could not condemn till after one whole day of fasting and prayer.

Judas knew all this when betraying Jesus, and had proceeded, as we all do, from mixed motives. He was an inveterate Jew, and representations had been made to him that appealed powerfully to his ingrained reverence for constituted authority. Then he, like all others, without one exception, had been disappointed in Jesus, who had not come out boldly but had appeared weak, and cowardly, vacillating. By being brought to trial, he might be forced to declare himself and make a stand. If he was declared a heretic and put out of the Synagogue, he would, so Judas believed, be obliged to set up the standard of revolt. Then there was his quarrel with John, and all the humiliations of that supper at Bethany. Judas, like all of his class, when inflamed with passion, was extremely inconsiderate and unreasonable.

The Syrian peasant of our own times will to-day freely offer his life for his Sheik, and to-morrow lie in wait to kill him. Racial character has not changed. When Judas began to suspect the real intent of the Hierarchy about Jesus, he was struck through as by a dart. He followed the proceedings before Caiaphas and Pilate and Herod with feelings and emotions that we may judge of only by their result. The noble, loving character of Jesus had made as deep an impression on Judas as upon

other disciples. He remembered now with a bursting heart and wild throes of pain all the innumerable words and acts of gentle love; and when at last he saw Jesus led forth for execution, he hastened away to the Temple, and with bitter words of reproach cast the money at the feet of the Priests and went and *hanged himself*.

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Of Jacobus and his band it can only be said that to the last they still hoped and half believed. They, like Peter and John, were present with the crowd on Calvary. A dim hope yet lingered that by some stupendous miracle, as by angels from Heaven, Jesus would yet discomfit all enemies and prove his Messiahship. But when, as it seemed, Jesus was actually dead, they grimly turned their faces again towards the wilderness, unconquerable, indomitable, at length to die to the very last man of that noble race, battling for "God and Liberty."

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Other friends of Jesus, meanwhile, were actively at work. While Jesus was before Herod, Joseph of Arimathea, with Nicodemus and Rachel, had made bold to gain entrance into Pilate's palace. Varus was already there, and Procula's friendship was assured. Pilate's decision had not yet been made, and it was hoped that he might be influenced to save Jesus. Varus had steadily befriended Jesus from the time when his name was first heard in Jerusalem; and it was through him, more than by all other means, that Procula had been interested in him. Then Varus' love for Rachel, and Rachel's requirement that Varus should forsake heathenism, had interested her. Procula had a woman's tender sympathy for all lovers, and Pilate himself was not insensible to the gentle flame. The rare simplicity and modesty of the beautiful Rachel appealed to him.

Though careful not to commit himself, through Pro-

cula they knew that Pilate was disposed to be friendly. If Varus could not become openly a Jew, he could do all in his power to protect Jesus; and that, in the end, might suffice. He was still received with friendliness at the house of Nicodemus, and Rachel had smiled upon him when he told of his efforts to befriend Jesus. He had brought Procula and Rachel together, and they had become firm friends.

When Pilate came in from the Prætorium, where other matters besides that of Jesus had detained him, he was in wrathful mood, and the presence of Joseph and Nicodemus, whose object he at once suspected, still further exasperated him. He at first treated them with scant courtesy, and except for the presence of the women and Varus, they would hardly have gained audience. Pilate reminded them bluntly that the place to transact business was in the Prætorium and not in the Cabinet; but the Rabbis were suave and politic, and Procula looked so sorrowful and downcast and Rachel so sad and beseeching, that Pilate's tone became less harsh, and at length he manifested a willingness to enter upon a discussion of the subject of Jesus' death.

When allowed to speak, Joseph, who had been trained as a lawyer, went over the grounds briefly but most convincingly, showing that Rome had rather a friend in Jesus than otherwise, because he deterred the Zealots from an uprising and was unalterably opposed to violence. The worst that could be said against Jesus, he averred, was that he was a dreamer, a religious enthusiast, whom much study had a little unsettled in mind. Pilate was interested, and answered that this last was his own belief about Jesus: he had concluded from his examination of him that he was really insane.

"But except you and Nicodemus," Pilate went on, "the best part of your whole nation seems determined that Jesus shall die, and to keep the peace I am afraid I shall

be obliged to let them have their way. If Herod sends Jesus back to me uncondemned,—which I fear he will,—I don't see how I can rightly protect him.”

Joseph answered that though it did appear that all the Jewish Nation desired the death of Jesus, it was very far from being so.

“This cabal of Annas,” he said, “has such control here in Jerusalem that none of those opposed dare speak their minds; but I have good reason to think that if all would speak as they really feel, there would be very few outside of the Official Class who would condemn Jesus.”

Varus supported this position with force and instances; but Pilate would not be moved. “Your High Priest,” he said, “is the responsible head of your Nation, and him, if anybody, I must recognize.”

The sound of the multitude returning from Herod now began to be heard, and Pilate left his visitors without ceremony, to go out again on the balcony. Soon the old cry of “Crucify him! Crucify him!” swelling into a roar announced to the anxious group in Pilate's Cabinet that their hope was over.

After listening in silence for some time, Varus spoke hesitatingly: “I have known of persons crucified who were revived and saved after they had hung on the cross for two days and were supposed to be dead.”

Joseph and Nicodemus exchanged glances, but their gloomy faces did not light up, and Joseph shook his head. No more was said, and each, busy with his own thoughts, sat listening to the ominous sounds outside. After a time the outcries ceased, and Pilate, with a grim, set, face, came in from the balcony. No one dared ask him what had been done, and at length Pilate himself spoke.

“I had to do it,” he said, “but I washed my hands of the whole thing, and let the curse of it light on your abominable Jewish Nation. I cannot see that this Jesus

has a friend in the world except you here ; they say his own family deride him."

Still no one spoke, and Pilate went on: "And to crown it all, they ask that he and all the crucified be killed outright before sunset. It appears that they have some superstition about persons being exposed that way on Saturday."

"And did you give the order?" asked Varus.

"Certainly," answered Pilate. "It is a mercy, really, to end their torments."

Again there was a gloomy silence. Procula and Rachel, as became women of their time, sat apart, not daring to speak. Then Rachel, sitting near to Procula on a divan, put her arms about Procula's neck and whispered something in her ear. Procula's face brightened, and they looked in each other's eyes with a new expression of hope. There was more whispering, and a smile almost came to Rachel's lips.

Then Procula with some embarrassment, breaking the silence, said, "If I might speak, would it not be proper and lawful for Joseph and Nicodemus, as the only friends of Jesus, to have possession of his body when he is dead?"

"I suppose they can have it if they want it," answered Pilate. "I don't know what you Jews do with the bodies of criminals, but by our Roman rule they should hang on the cross till the birds pick their bones."

At this, Pilate was called away to the Prætorium, and the five friends of Jesus looked in one another's eyes and breathed more freely. And now Procula made known the subject of Rachel's whispering. They were to have Jesus' body, and if mutilation could by some means be prevented, might not Jesus be saved, even yet, as Varus had suggested? Joseph and Nicodemus shook their heads gloomily, and called attention to the order of Pilate that Jesus should be killed with clubs.

“But I can prevent that!” exclaimed Varus.

“Well, but Pilate does not give us Jesus’ body till he is dead,” objected Joseph. “Yet it seems the only thing we can do,” answered Varus, “and something may come of it.”

And so it was left; and Varus hastened away to procure an order excepting Jesus from the *crurifragium*.

LXX

ECHOES

"*O Sancta Simplicitas.*" (Ah, Divine Simplicity.)—John Huss, at the stake.

"And the next day was the Sabbath." Among the millions of Pilgrims in and about Jerusalem who had piously come there from all parts of the world to celebrate with joy and feasting the day of their deliverance, the crucifixion of Jesus had spread a feeling of sadness and gloom. Again the long-looked-for Messiah had proven a failure and a dream. The faith of many in the sacred oracles, in the coming of a Messiah, or in God at all, was sorely shaken. Thousands inwardly resolved that Jerusalem should see them no more. They would go back to their homes, hopeless of any deliverance, of any glorious future, but with the old Jewish obstinacy and exclusiveness unsubdued.

At this Sabbath morning service, the four hundred and sixty Synagogues of Jerusalem, and the Temple, were crowded with worshipers; and there, and among the camps outside the city, priests and Levites, in orders, were haranguing the multitudes according to the planned instructions of Caiaphas. Their discourses were founded upon the well-known story of Korah and Dathan and Abiram, and supported by plentiful quotations from the Psalms and Proverbs. They sought to impress the people with the renewed example of God's wrath against those who rebelled against *Constituted Authority*, against the *Powers That Be*.

At the Temple, the High Priest himself appeared in his gorgeous robes, with a hundred priests about him. Five hundred Levites chanted a triumphal hymn, while the

great organ groaned and boomed, and the fire on the Great Altar rose heavenwards, licking the blood of sacrifice. A thousand shekels' value of precious Arabian gum was burned on the Altar of Incense, the odor of which filled the whole mount and went abroad on the winds.

It was sought to make it a day of rejoicing, of feasting and gladness. The people, from old habit, looked and listened and worshiped; but they were sad. Of the disciples only Peter and John remained in Jerusalem; the rest had not stopped in their wild fear and flight till they were again in Galilee. The women had remained, and with them were Mary and Doris of Nazareth. They had come piously with their little gift to worship at the Temple, and remained now, sorrowing. They had always feared that it would all end in misery.

They, with the other women, and Peter and John, listened reverently and tearfully, while the white-robed priest in the little Galilean Synagogue in the suburbs discoursed solemnly on the sin and the fate of "Heretics." "Alas and alas, and so it is God's will."

Mary of Magdala was there, too, with her blind old father, but not with the others. She sat apart and alone with her sorrows. She had come to the Synagogue from the force of habit and association, but she did not listen to the preacher: she was hearing again those thrilling tones, those words of love: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

LXXI

THE RESURRECTION

“For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.”—John xx-9.

“Thus all evidences go to prove that the belief in the Messiah would have died out without the living Jesus.”—Keim.

And then another morning dawned,—the first day of the week. By its first dim light the veiled woman we have seen so oft before might have been seen passing out at the Damascus Gate. Few were passing out at this early hour, but many were coming in — hucksters of all kinds, peddlers, gardeners with their vegetables loaded on asses or carried wearily in baskets, rough peasants with cages of doves, poultry, and singing birds, and some with huge wine skins lashed to their backs, filled with wine.

All are hurrying on, thinking of nothing but to sell their wares and get back to renewed toil at the hut on the hill or on the mountain side. They are the despised Amhaartz, whose toil supports the splendors of all the palaces and the Temple, but who have no leisure to so much as look upon their glories. They take no notice of the woman; they have ceased even to speak or to think of the crucifixions that took place on the very road they have come, only two days ago. The victims were all “male-factors” to them now, and the spectacle, like other “shows,” is a thing of the past.

The woman hurries on, avoiding the bare hill, Golgotha, where the three blood-stained crosses still stand as warnings to the wicked. She turns off to the right of the highway, and by a private road at the base of the hill enters the grounds of Joseph of Arimathea. It is really a garden, beautifully kept and filled with rare plants and flowers. It is enclosed by a wall of solid masonry; but the

gates are open. Joseph is sufficiently a Democrat to make common ground of his parks and gardens. Taking a side path to the left, the woman keeps along the western wall of the garden, which soon terminates at a perpendicular cliff of rock — the eastern base of Calvary, or Golgotha.

Here Joseph has had excavated for himself a tomb; and here he and Nicodemus had laid the body of Jesus when they took it from the cross two days before. The woman knows well the way, for she and Mary of Clopas, Jesus' aunt, were here among the shrubbery, unseen but observant, when Jesus was laid there. She remembers every detail with the vividness of an all absorbing love,—how carelessly and hastily the embalmers had seemed to wrap the body, and how the great stone that closed the opening of the sepulchre was, with levers and bars and much labor of several men, moved into place. And now, as she drew near in the dawning light, with her eyes fixed on the spot, what was it that made her heart stop beating, and a vague sense of fear and awe steal over her like a flood?

Was not the door of the tomb open, and the great stone moved away? The woman paused, and gazed like one in a dream. The tomb fronted the east, and the light from the cloudless dawn shone full upon it. There could be no mistake. The door was open. Going on now hastily, the woman looked into the tomb. In the dim light she could see a confusion of white cloths and napkins, but no body. Finally, with a shudder, she reached her hand into the receptacle, but there was nothing there. Then the woman turned and fled.

Before reaching the city gate she met Peter and John. Mary of Clopas had told them where Jesus was laid, and they were going there to pay in secret their last respects to their murdered friend. When the woman told them that the tomb was empty, they started to run, while the woman, already spent with running, came on more slowly. When she reached the tomb, Peter and John had already satis-

fied themselves that the tomb was empty, and they told the woman that it was doubtless an added outrage of the enemies of Jesus which they were powerless to avenge.

The woman could only weep; she offered no suggestion. Peter and John were also very sorrowful in themselves, and the woman's tears added to their sadness.

"Would God I could have died for him; and I was not worthy even to suffer *with* him. I am a wretch, unfit to live and afraid to die. I was such a cowardly brute that I denied even that I knew him."

And the sturdy fisherman Peter sat down on a stone seat by the roadway, and burying his face in his hands, sobbed like a child. John, too, was weeping, and for a time the three friends mingled their tears in silence. At last John spoke. "Yes," John said, at last, "we have all proved ourselves unworthy of such a friend. Judas a traitor, and all the rest fled on the first alarm; and I have nothing to boast of above the others. I didn't come out like a man, but skulked under cover. Comfort yourself, my brother, you are no worse than the rest of us. We all, by our actions if not by our words, have denied our Lord."

Peter was a little comforted by these generous words of John, and dried his tears. "It is all a terrible business," Peter said, remorsefully, "a failure on every hand. All hopes of the New Kingdom gone, forever! And then to think of how it will be when we get home to Galilee. What will our fathers say, and my poor wife and children? God help them, for I don't even know where they are; and our business, so long neglected, is all ruined. Our fathers are old men, and Hippo by this time has gobbled everything." And Peter's tears flowed afresh.

"But plainly, it is no use for us to remain here," he went on. "We shall be arrested next; and what can we do? There is nothing for it but to go back to the only thing we know how to do, and I am going back to fishing."

John signified his readiness to go too, and then he told

the woman to tell his mother and Aunt Mary and Joanna and the rest of the Galilean women that they had gone on to Galilee, and that they had better come at once and not wait for the ending of the Feast.

"Jerusalem is no safe place for any of us Galileans now," added Peter, as they turned away.

When Peter and John were gone, the woman still lingered, and finally went again to the tomb. She would at least carry away a napkin, a towel, or some small memento of the loved one. She had often heard Jesus speak of angels and their ministry to him: might not the angels have taken him away? There was a moment when she imagined that the white cloths and wrappings left in the tomb *were* angels; it made her heart leap, and from her beating pulse and throbbing brain came only the sad refrain, "He is not here! He is not here! He is not here!"

While she sat weeping she heard a step on the gravel walk, and turning slightly sidewise, she saw through her tears a tall man standing near, who said to her, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?"

She, supposing it to be the gardener, saith unto him, "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away."

A moment's silence, and then the man, speaking low, uttered the one word, "Mary!"

Mary of Magdala was thrilled. That word and that tone she had not heard since the old innocent days of Galilee, Capernaum, and Simon's garden. Rising and casting herself at Jesus' feet, she murmured forth her woman's inarticulate, passionate words, "O my Master and my Lord."

At the moment the cloudless sun, peeping above the crest of Olivet, sends a shaft of gold to gild and glorify the scene. The odor of opening flowers is redolent in the air. A thousand larks, just springing from their leafy

beds, are soaring heavenwards, pouring forth in ecstasy their wondrous song; while from the top of Calvary, where the crosses stand, a half naked peasant lad, seeking his father's goats, is joyously singing a Psalm of Asaph.

But Mary does not hear; she does not see; her outward sense is blind and deaf. But her rapt soul is hymning its immortal song, its triumphal *Te Deum*, *the first glad greeting to the Risen Christ*.

LXXII

OBDURATE

"When they, therefore, were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?"—Acts i-6.

Our story approaches its end. Of the many men and women spoken of in these pages we can give of almost none a final account. Indeed no final account can be made till the Last and Great Accounting.

These figures, Characters we may call them, came or were pushed out upon this garish World Stage from the black bosom of Night, and for better or worse,—with more or less of self-consciousness,—have performed their part. They have gone back whence they came. Night has swallowed them up and reclaimed its own. They are gone: their work remains. No power short of Omnipotence can take that away. And so it is with the least as with the greatest. The honest hammer-stroke by sooty forge sounds in Eternity as surely, perhaps as loudly, as the thunderings of Waterloo. We poor, dim-eyed historians can tell only of the little we see and know,—and that is little indeed. We note the slow-moving hands on the face of the dial, but we see and know nothing of the mechanism within.

To this history we have little more to add. In Jerusalem, a few weeks after the events last recorded, there was a wedding at the house of Nicodemus. Varus at last obtained his Rachel. Just how it came about has never been known, for Varus became neither Jew nor Nazarene. Neither did Rachel, nor Nicodemus, nor Joseph join the new sect that was beginning to stir up Jerusalem. They, with Gamaliel and their friend and relative, Zaccheus of

Jericho, were very liberal towards the so-called Nazarenes, and did what they could to protect and defend them against persecution; but they held tacitly aloof, and kept to their old ways.

Neither was Mary of Magdala known any more in Jerusalem. Leading her blind old father by the hand, she went back to Magdala, and made a home for him there in the cottage where he was born. The old man, however, lived but a few days to enjoy his bettered lot; and Mary henceforth, friendless and alone, disappears from history, her work only remaining.

Salome, the mother of James and John, with Mary of Clopas, Joanna, and the rest of the women who followed Jesus, went back to their families, and history knows them no more.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, and James the Essene and Jude the Zealot, his brothers, were drawn to Jerusalem in the excitement that prevailed concerning the reappearance of Jesus; and being greatly honored by the new sect, as the near relations of Jesus, they became its tardy but most zealous supporters. The gentle Doris was dead.

With the crucifixion of Jesus and the flight of the disciples, it was believed by Annas and his cabal that the heresy of the "vile Nazarene" was effectually rooted out and exterminated; but there remained through all, among the poor of Jerusalem, especially the women, an ineradicable clinging to Jesus and his teachings. Their faith as yet had taken no form, and had no definite expression: they simply *believed*.

Among these, within the first week after Jesus' death, there was circulated the story that Jesus had arisen. At first it was said that Mary of Magdala only had seen him; then Mary of Clopas was joined with Mary of Magdala, and both had beheld him. Soon it was also Peter and John who had seen him, and afterwards, many others.

This story, confined at first to those who had been fol-

lowers and believers, soon spread over all Jerusalem, and created great excitement. Thousands visited the empty tomb, and inquiries were made of the gardener where the tomb was, and of Josph and Nicodemus; but nothing was learned to clear up the mystery.

Annas and Caiaphas had it given out that Jesus' disciples had stolen the body and carried it away to Galilee. Still the rumor grew and spread that Jesus had been seen alive by many persons. The women, Salome and the others, lingering long at the feast, finally carried the story home to Galilee. Among the eleven disciples it created a profound impression. Peter and John confirmed the story of the empty tomb, and the women's stories, though contradictory and improbable, were talked of and dwelt upon till the most unbelieving were more than half convinced.

Losses and derangements in their business during their absence had necessitated new combinations, and seven of the remaining disciples had joined in a copartnership, leaving the old men, Zebedee and Jonas, to mend nets and do odd jobs at home, while they took again to the lake and their old employment. Their means having been exhausted and the rich women no longer contributing, the disciples had been obliged to begin business with old, worn nets and leaky boats; and thus far they had met with very poor success. They were sick and discouraged, the fall having been so sudden and so great. Only a short time before, they were confidently looking for the day when they should sit upon thrones, judging the world; and now, forced to go back to their hard trade of fishing, they were finding even that to yield a very precarious livelihood. Then their homes and friends were no longer what they had once been.

The old men, Zebedee and Jonas, could not forget former prosperity, and must persist, with an old man's privilege, in drawing comparisons that were very exasperating. They were continually recurring to what might

have been. Then those disciples who had wives were made to feel the smart of an overworked woman's tongue. Why had they been such fools? Even on the streets of Capernaum they were pointed at and often reviled as those hare-brained dupes of the "mad Prophet of Nazareth."

And still the old dreams, "that were not all a dream," came back to haunt them at their daily toil. The lake shore abounded in delightful reminiscences of the beloved Master. Here, under this spreading tree by this rock, in this flowery glen, at noon-tide rest or before the fire at midnight hour, he had talked to them of the brotherly love, the peace, and plenty, and happiness of the New Kingdom of God. How their hearts had glowed! What visions, as of Paradise, had he called up! And could it be all a dream? No, in God's name, no! Had not Mary of Magdala seen and talked with the Lord, and many others in Jerusalem? And had he not sent them word that he would meet them again in Galilee?

The great miracle they had so long looked for *had been accomplished*; not, indeed, just *the* miracle they had looked for, but God's ways were not man's ways, and He would turn things to meet all their hopes and expectations at last. Filled and encouraged by such thoughts, the disciples toiled on, and waited.

One morning early, as they drew towards shore in their fishing boats, they saw a fire burning on the beach. It was a lonely, rocky coast, far down towards Tiberias, where they sometimes stopped for rest and refreshment. They had toiled all night and had caught nothing; their boats were leaking and their nets were torn. They were going in for repairs. At first they saw only the fire on the shore; then as they drew nearer, they saw a man, who called to them in fishermen's dialect and asked what luck they had had. They told him that they had caught nothing. By the light in the east shining upon the still waters of the lake the movement of a large school of fish near the sur-

face could be plainly seen by a person on shore, and the man called out to the disciples and told them that there was a school of fish on the right side of their boats, and like one familiar with the business, directed them how to manage to catch them.

The disciples did as directed, and soon perceived that they had inclosed a great number of fish. By this time it had grown light enough to see more plainly, and John, looking more closely at the man on shore, told Peter that he believed it was Jesus! Peter then looked more keenly also, and he, too, saw that it was Jesus. In the labor and excitement of working the nets and boats, with so many fishes, Peter, with characteristic vigor, had thrown off all his clothes, and now hastily putting on but one garment, a coarse fisher's coat, sprang overboard and swam to land. He found that the man was surely Jesus.

Without knowing that the disciples would come to this place, Jesus on his way to Capernaum had been preparing his own breakfast, as appeared by some small fish broiling on the coals. Though it was immediately known to all that Jesus was come, they did not at once abandon their nets, but first secured their fish and drew their boats to land, before joining him about the fire. To Peter alone this return of Jesus was a genuine reality.

He looked upon Jesus as the same he had ever been: he was alive and in the flesh. The others, more awed, received him more distantly. They had a sort of fear, as of a ghost or a spirit, and in their undisguised simplicity gazed upon Jesus without speaking, as if he were indeed, like Samuel of old, an unsubstantial phantom, a presence that would shortly dissolve and disappear.

Jesus, observing this awe-struck appearance among the disciples, and especially in Thomas, spoke at once, and plainly, about it. He told them not to be afraid; for he was a man of flesh and blood, the same as ever, and subject to human infirmities, as he always had been.

“I have to eat and drink, just as you do,” he said, and showed them his hands, yet unhealed. “See here, where the nails that fastened me to the cross went through. A spirit is not so, and spirits do not eat or drink.”

Then turning to Thomas, whose stare of astonishment and incredulity was still very noticeable, he said, “Thomas, you seem to be yet amazed and doubtful. Come here and touch me, examine my wounds, and satisfy yourself that I am flesh and blood like the rest of you.”

But Thomas was too much awed and ashamed to come near, and Jesus went on to other things. He was still so intent on his mission to the world that he did not think to make any explanations about his resurrection and his return to them; but he began talking to them much the same as he had ever done. He repeated, with some changes, the story of the Great Supper, and declared that there were many among the Gentiles more worthy than some among the Jews. Nevertheless, Jerusalem, he said, was still to be held, as the Prophets had so often declared it to be, the head and front and center of all. It was the Mountain of the Lord's House, and all nations should flow unto it. They should read and search the Prophets more diligently, he charged them; for in them they would find that which would make clear much that now seemed to them dark and strange.

The disciples listened with gradually decreasing awe. Soon they began to ask questions, and even to object. How would they dare to go to Jerusalem again? They would be seized at once, maybe all of them crucified. Nobody cared for them or believed in them any more. They were reviled and mocked here at their own homes. The women had become discouraged and gone away. The Zealots were offended and could hardly be regained, *unless* —? If Jesus would only *now* raise the banner of revolt, and offer to restore the Kingdom to Israel! Then —.

Would he not now do that, being forced to it?

The disciples at last plainly asked Jesus that question, and as he did not at first answer, they repeated it, one after another, till most of them had asked it. Jesus, at first so cheerful and happy in meeting his old friends, was so wounded and hurt by this exhibition of dullness, obtuseness, and complete worldliness that he grew gradually silent, and appeared so sad and dejected that the disciples grew ashamed and ceased to question him.

Then with a sigh, Jesus took up the last question, and told them that the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel was a matter that they had no right to inquire about or meddle with. It was something with which they had nothing to do. It would come in its due course, when God willed. *Their* business was to follow him, to practice what he had taught them, and to preach and spread abroad the doctrine of Peace and Brotherly Love throughout the world, beginning at Jerusalem. Many other things Jesus said and did, which, as one of his old biographers remarks, with the artless exaggeration characteristic of his time, "If they were to be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

But at last Jesus ceased speaking, and arose to go away. He appeared weak and weary and dejected, more so than the disciples had ever before seen him, even on that awful night at Gethsemane. He did not bid them good-bye, and they dared not ask him whither he was going; they only gazed after him in silence till he disappeared round a point of rocks, and they saw him no more.

LXXIII

FAITHFUL

"The beginning of things evades us: their end evades us also. We see only the middle."—Hindoo Poet.

In the desert our story began. In the desert it ends. The desert, like the sea, has no paths, but by natural landmarks, as hills, ledges of rock, wadies, the experienced traveller finds his way.

It is mid-afternoon of a sultry summer day, and we are at the edge of the desert, not far from the cave of Addi, where John, before beginning his ministry, last abode. With our face to the east, the yawning abyss of the great wady, with spur-like, impassable chasms jutting out into the plain, lies on our left, and close on our right a high beetling tell of bare rock contracts the roadway eastward to a narrow pass.

This way it was that John and Jesus took on their way towards the desert. And nothing has changed. Beyond the pass, to east and south, the desert sands stretch out illimitably, as then. The summer sun pours down its stifling heat; the sand crackles beneath our tread. All vegetation is burnt up, save here and there a thorny cactus, sere and brown with dust. No bird, no flower, no blade of grass, no sound, no moving breath,—a barren, lifeless solitude, the image of a spent, dead world. So it seems; but as we look more closely, we see some locusts gnawing at the shrunken and juiceless cacti; a gaunt hyena stalks along the rocky border of the tell; and far overhead two vultures sail, not now towards Mecca and the caravans, but circling with fixed wings, in spirals vast, looking for prey.

At the pass, sheltered a little from the burning sun by an angle of the cliff, sits a woman, veiled and dressed in the

coarse garb of a Galilean peasant. There is a small bundle and a cruse of water at her feet. We are reminded of Hagar, sent away to the desert by Abraham,—only here there is no Ishmael.

But who is this that now appears, wending his way towards the pass from the west? A man, surely, walking slowly with a staff. As he draws near, we see that it is Jesus: but so changed! His form is bent and his steps slow and feeble; his hair, still abundant and unshorn and without covering, is white as snow. The noble beauty of his face is not gone, but, as we might say, etherealized, purified of earth; and wan and haggard as it is, it is still a face to haunt one like a dream.

When the woman sees Jesus, she bows her face upon her knees and prays. At last, when she hears his step quite near, she rises and casts herself at his feet. A deeper shade of pain fixes itself on Jesus' brow when he looks upon the woman, and he takes her by the hand to raise her up; but she will rise only to her knees. She only looks pleadingly up into Jesus' face and does not speak. Jesus gazes upon the woman with pity and love, but he shakes his head.

"In my Father's House are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for *you*, that where I am, there may ye be also. It is not meet that thou shouldst go with me now. God buried Moses and Aaron alone in the desert, and Enoch and Elijah he took secretly away. Shall the Son of Man shrink from an end like theirs? It is God's way to confirm the word spoken by His Prophets to men.

"God's peace be unto thee. Farewell!"

And Jesus, stooping, kissed the woman's upturned brow, and was gone.

From the learned and judicious historian the inquiring reader has doubtless already learned how a concatenation

of casual events and conditions in the Roman World gave ground and impetus for the upbuilding of the Christian Religion: how Heathenism had grown rotten and effete, and had broken down: how Judaism had become alike outworn: what effects the preaching of John Baptist had produced,—the writings of Philo, the Alexandrian School, Buddhistic inoculation, and so on, all contributing their stream or little rill to make the mighty river of Reform.

Not altogether a barren speculation, perhaps; and yet we should know once for all that the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment. A truly Great Life, lived in this sinful world, cannot fail under *any* conditions. The stars in their courses fight against Sisera. The Angels of God advance the banner of Truth and Righteousness.

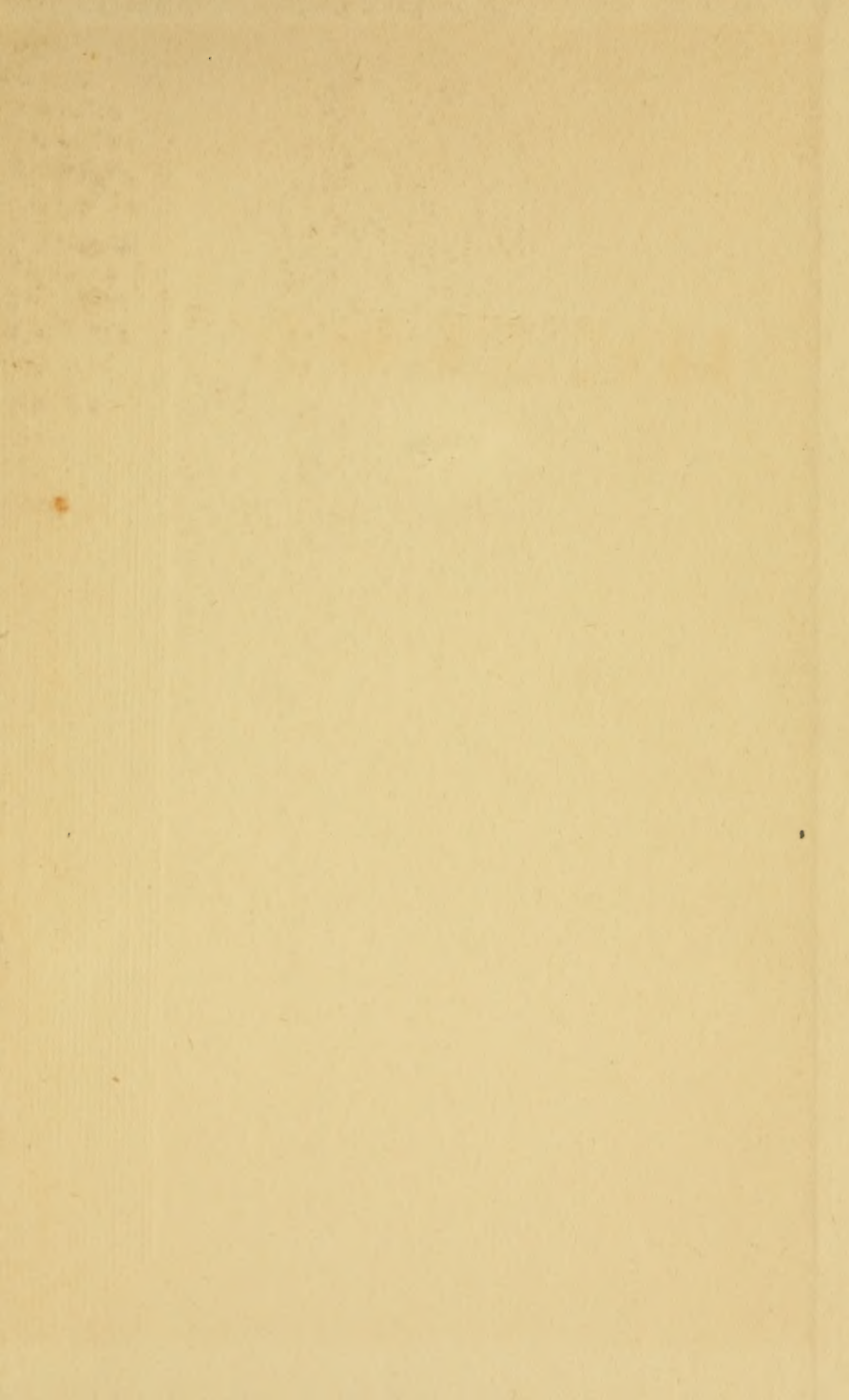
Ofttimes the faithful wait long; the night seems endless; false lights appear shining for a time almost like suns, only to go out in utter darkness. Nineteen hundred years is a long night, seemingly, for poor terrestrial man; but it is not endless. There *is* an end. Already the Daystar appears. The East is aglow. A shaft of light, as of pure gold, from the Great Luminary streams upwards to the zenith.

There will be Day.

Date Due

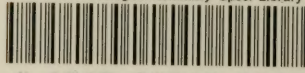
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